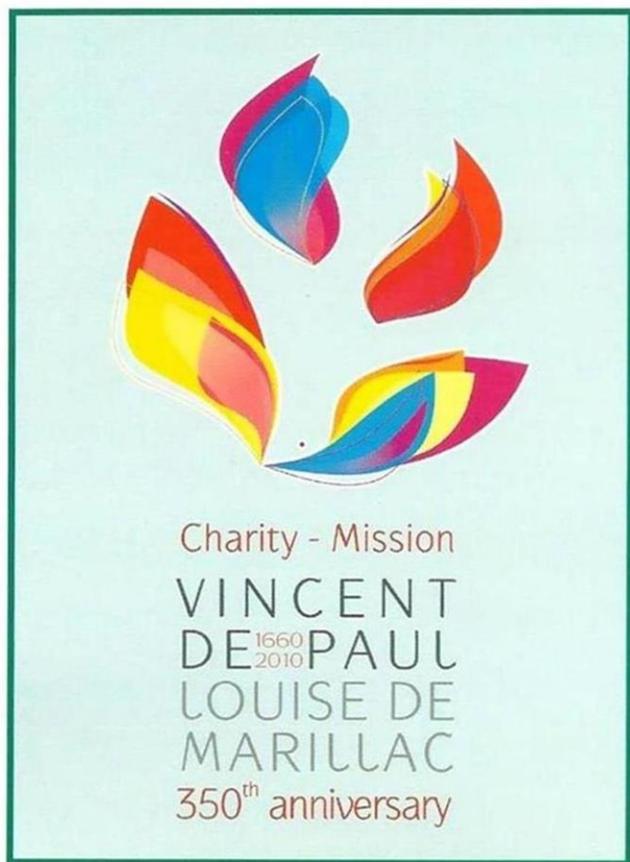


VINCENTIANA

55th Year - N. 1

January-March 2011



Echoes of the 350th Anniversary

CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION
GENERAL CURIA

GENERAL CURIA

CONGREGAZIONE DELLA MISSIONE

CURIA GENERALIZIA

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Dilecto Nobis in Christo
Reverendo Domino
Aloysio MEZZADRI

Causa Beatificationis et Canonizationis perinsignium sodalium duplicis Vincentianae Familiae Nostrae, qui sanctitatis fama conspicui christifidelibus in exemplum proponi possint, pro viribus promovere capiente, idonei Viri operam, qui eiusdem duplicis Vincentianae Familiae vices hac in re gerat, libenter adhibemus.

Et cum Te vitae probitate, doctrina necnon in rebus gerendis sollertia ornatum, ad huius officii munus idoneum iudicemus, praehabito consensu nostri Consilii Generalis die 30.IX.2010, **POSTULATOREM GENERALEM** pro omnibus praedictis Causis nominamus ac constituimus, ita aut eiusdem duplicis Vincentianae Familiae nomine, apud Congregationem de Causis Sanctorum et alias competentes Auctoritates ecclesiasticas instructionem canonicorum processuum sollicitare et Causas pro viribus agere valeas.

Ad hoc exercendum munus, praeter facultates iuri communi tributas — praesertim unum vel plures Vicepostulatores extra Urbem nominandi, necnon bona ad Causas pertinentia, iuxta Sanctae Sedis normas, administrandi sumptusque necessarios vel convenientes faciendi — omnes alias opportunas et necessaria in hunc finem Tibi concedimus.

Ne omittas autem de Causarum cursu deque rebus maioris momenti, singulis saltem annis, Nos certiores facere.

Omnes nostrae duplicis Vincentianae Familiae sodales hortamur ut Te, in eiusdem muneris exercitio, adiuvent Tibique opera libenter praestent.

Datum Romae, 2.XI.2010.



G. Gregorius Gay, C.M.

G. Gregorius Gay, C.M.
Superior Generalis

Claudius Santangelo, C.M.

Claudius Santangelo, C.M.
Secretarius Generalis

TWO CASES

Rome, 11 January 2011

To All the Visitors of the Congregation of the Mission

My dear brothers in Saint Vincent,

May the grace and peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ fill your hearts now and forever!

In the Synthesis of our General Assembly we spoke about the value of ongoing formation. It is stated in paragraph 7 that “all our persons and our possessions belong to the poor if we truly believe, beyond simply saying, that they are our lords and masters. Ongoing formation looks into disposing the best of our resources, the confreres, toward evangelization and service of the poor.”

In the following paragraph of the Synthesis we speak about “the material resources of the community [being] the patrimony of the poor, as Saint Vincent so often reminded us. The wise management of resources, on the one hand, must conform to the basic rules of justice within the community; on the other hand assure the viability of the work of mission and charity. We look for in the Congregation of the Mission an equitable and effective distribution of resources.”

My brothers, it is for this reason that I write to you today with a two-fold purpose:

1. an issue that was talked about at the General Assembly regarding the support of the provinces for the General Curia. and
2. ongoing formation at the international level.

For the first purpose we have come up with what we consider to be an equitably plan that is understood as follows:

Regarding the Provinces’ support of the Curia, we have decided to change the way in which each province is asked to contribute support for the maintenance and operation of the General Curia. As those who attended the General Assembly would know from the Econome General’s report, in the past each province was asked to contribute \$42 to the Curia for each ordained priest in the province. The amount the Curia received under this method was dependent upon the number of priests in the Congregation on January 1 of the year in which the contribution was made. Father Gouldrick pointed out in his presen-

tation that basing the amount on the number of ordained confreres put the heaviest burden on the provinces with the most members. As we look at our growth over the recent past, we are seeing that those provinces with the increasing numbers are not necessarily the provinces with the strongest financial resources necessary to withstand a higher province contribution each year.

Father Gouldrick therefore proposed at the General Assembly a new method for payment, based on whether or not a province was a recipient of aid from the Mission Fund Distribution. He actually used this method when assessing the charges for the General Assembly, charging equally the MFD-eligible provinces 35% of the total cost of the Assembly and each of the provinces not eligible for MFD contributions from the Curia 65% of the total cost of the Assembly. Only positive comments came back to the Curia for this change.

I have decided to use this same method relative to the payment of the annual contribution to the Curia to help support its operating costs. I decided, however, to make a couple of changes. First, I am asking the provinces to contribute a total of \$175,000. Further I am asking those not receiving MFD assistance to pay equally among them 75% of that total cost and each of the provinces receiving MFD assistance to pay 25% of the total \$175,000. These charges will be made to the respective province accounts in January.

I thank you for your generosity in helping to support the Curia Generalizia. As the building ages, our maintenance costs increase as well.

With regard to the second purpose of this letter, ongoing formation, that is “disposing of the best of our resources, the confreres, toward evangelization and service of the poor” we also turn to you as the Provinces of the Congregation of the Mission. As you know, the Center for International Formation (CIF) in Paris is tasked with the ongoing formation of confreres. Since the first session in 1994 more than 600 confreres have taken part in the CIF program for their personal renewal. During their time in CIF, the confreres reflect on how the Vincentian vocation and charism is lived in community life and in ministry. This reflection takes place in the experience of the internationality of the Congregation.

Confreres continue to avail themselves of the programs offered at CIF. The participation in the programs in recent years reflects the changing panorama of the membership in the Congregation. More and more the confreres come from Provinces and regions which have not only younger membership but which also sustain some hopes of continued new membership in the Congregation. There are cases, incidentally, in which these Province are also those with limited financial resources.

Ongoing formation is strategically indispensable to the Congregation's fidelity to the mission and continuing service in the Church and in the world. It is an aspect of our life that seeks collaboration from the whole Congregation. It is in this sense that I would like to invite your Province to be one of the more active partners in this collaboration.

The programs as they are run are rather costly. One factor is the high cost of living in Paris. The others are due to the expenses of translators and the travel expenses of confreres coming from different parts of the world. A greater number of participants would considerably lower the cost of participation. There would be a greater number of participants if they could be helped with their expenses.

With your help we can set up a special account in the General Curia from which the directors of CIF can disburse scholarships according to the expressed needs of certain Provinces. Let us help others who desire to deepen their living of the charism in a creatively faithful way. Presuming on your generosity, I thank you in anticipation.

Your brother in Saint Vincent,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "G. Gregory Gay, C.M." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "G" and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

G. Gregory Gay, C.M.
Superior General

MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

Rome, 13 January 2011

To All the Members of the Congregation of the Mission

***The Congregation is not now what it once was;
nor is it what it will be.***

My dear confreres,

May the grace and peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ fill your hearts now and forever!

The world is not now what it once was, nor is it what it will be. My brothers, the world has changed faster than most of us would ever have anticipated. The internet is one of the key movers in this change. One web site alone, Facebook, has a population the size of the third largest country in the world, behind only China and India. We live in a world without borders. Can missionaries neglect this virtual country or choose not to engage in conversation with its citizens, most of whom are young? Have not missionaries always had to learn the language and culture of a mission territory? We hear from Pope Benedict XVI, that we are to, “...*help the men and women of our digital age to sense the Lord's presence, to grow in expectation and hope, and to draw near to the Word of God which offers salvation and fosters an integral human development. In this way the Word can traverse the many crossroads created by the intersection of all the different 'highways' that form 'cyberspace', and show that God has his rightful place in every age, including our own*” (Message for the 44th World Communications Day). How can we do this if we do not speak their language and frequently encounter them in their virtual world?

The Congregation is not now what it once was, nor is it what it will be. Just twenty years ago few in the Congregation had any awareness of how the world would be changed by technology. A mere ten years ago, at the beginning of the third millennium, our former Superior General, Father Robert Maloney wrote a series of letters, one requiring each province to have an internet connection in its motherhouse and house of formation. We have advanced to the stage where the General Curia can send e-mails to all of the provinces and vice-provinces of the Congregation and to many of the individual confreres as well. He also

encouraged each province to have a website. It is noteworthy that today only a handful of provinces have active and attractive web sites. Father Maloney also challenged us to champion the pastoral use of technology on behalf of the poor.

I have two questions to pose to you for your reflection, my brothers. First, How will the world be different in just six years? Whether we like it or not, technology will be woven more and more into the fabric of our lives, even the lives of the poorest among us. Second, Will we be ready to serve in such a world? Our Lines of Action from the General Assembly 2010 provide direction as they focus on:

1. Formation: encouraging confreres to form attitudes and develop skills necessary for pastoral ministry in the next six years;
2. Reconfiguration: being able to streamline our structures and our administrative processes;
3. Dialog: widening our horizons to discover new needs and collaborative ways of evangelizing and serving;
4. Creativity: responding courageously to new needs in a world without frontiers;
5. Systemic change: aimed at root causes of poverty. All of these goals can be greatly facilitated by the use of the internet and tools of technology.

Can we use our Vincentian technology resources:

- to work together with others, especially members of the Vincentian Family and yet beyond, in serving the poor and investigating the causes of poverty?
- to seek grants for setting up computer learning centers in the poorest countries? We had a pilot project going in Africa, specifically regarding computers and computer centers, but because of lack of financial backing, the project was not able to move forward. Yet there were eight or nine countries of our provinces in Africa interested in pursuing this means of development as a tool of helping to educate and at the same time to evangelize.
- to continue to train confreres in computer technology? I know of individual confreres throughout the Congregation who have a particular interest in this type of technology and are well equipped and are moving forward. A good example is Father Aidan Rooney in Bolivia. From Bolivia he has the opportunity to develop a great deal of technology for the service in the Diocese as well as the service of the poor that he and the men in the mission there are serving.
- to devise ways in which older confreres can help in the service of the poor through computer technology?

We have to do some reviewing and take specific steps:

- That each province have a website that is attractive, especially to the young, and that it be frequently updated. It means commitment of personnel without a doubt. And yet, a commitment that will enable a confrere or confreres to reach a good number of people in and through this technological advancement.
- At the international level, we are willing to move forward with this training. We will try to offer as much as we can to help the confreres become equipped in this means of evangelization.
- We can help to establish guidelines or perspectives on the pastoral use of the internet by missionaries.
- We can provide assistance through Famvin in setting up websites, that is, in the major languages that can be easily updated by anyone who has the basic skills of word processing.
- We have also thought about the possibility of a type of international gathering, whether it be virtual or in person in order that we might come together and share our expertise and at the same time help prepare moving others forward in this most needed advancement in technology.

Let me conclude with a great thought made by John Paul II in his document on the Church and the internet in 2002. *“Although the virtual reality of cyberspace cannot substitute for real interpersonal community, the incarnational reality of the sacraments and the liturgy or the immediate and direct proclamation of the gospel, it can complement them, attract people to a fuller experience of the life of faith, and enrich the religious lives of users.”*

My brothers, I ask you to reflect seriously upon this message and move forward with a desire to evangelize and serve those who are our lords and masters with new ways and new means ever faithful to our call.

Your brother in Saint Vincent,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "G. Gregory Gay, C.M." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending to the left.

G. Gregory Gay, C.M.
Superior General

VINCENTIAN MARIAN YOUTH

Rome, 2 February 2011

Feast of the Presentation of the Lord in the Temple

My brothers and sisters of the Vincentian Family,

May the grace and peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ fill your hearts now and forever!

I write to you today as the Director General of the Vincentian Marian Youth. In August the association had its Third General Assembly in Lisbon, Portugal. Since then the International Council has had its first organizational meeting and I would like to share with you some of the conclusions of both the Assembly and this International Council meeting.

The General Assembly produced a Final Document which had the following categories: Spiritual Life, Formation, Service and Mission, Vincentian Family, Self Financing.

I have to admit with all honesty that I was very impressed with the quality of the interventions that were made at the General Assembly and the depth of the leadership that we have in our youth for the Vincentian Marian movement. They kept highlighting the importance of the spiritual life of the Association. Among the highlights of the Final Document with regard to the Spiritual Life is a desire on the part of the young people to learn to pray more deeply. We want to move in this direction and encourage all those who are moderators for the Vincentian Marian Youth to assume the responsibility of helping these young people to learn to pray, especially to pray in the spirit of Saint Vincent and Saint Louise.

There was also a great interest on the part of the members of the Assembly to deepen their understanding of Marian theology in light of the Church teachings on Mary in order that they might have a clearer understanding of her role in their lives especially in the key moment when they consecrate their lives to Mary as a sign of their commitment to the Association. In the same light, the young people had a great desire to be able to deepen their knowledge of the Word of God in the context of the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

I was delighted to hear that there was such a desire to focus on the dynamism of God's Word and at the same time the dynamism of God's presence in His Body and Blood in the Eucharist as well as God's mercy

expressed in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Good accompaniment of these young people is a responsibility that needs to be carried out at the local level by their moderators, whether they be members of the Congregation of the Mission, Daughters of Charity, other branches of the Vincentian Family or lay moderators.

The ecclesial dimension of the Vincentian Marian Youth is one of the principal points of the association. There was true interest on the part of the members of the Assembly to develop the Association in the context of parochial ministry. And so I say to all the members of the Congregation of the Mission who are responsible for parishes to do all they can to promote the Vincentian Family in their parishes and in a special manner, paying attention to the young people who need to hear God's Word from those chosen as their pastors and to do so from the context of our own Vincentian charism. Sometimes it is embarrassing to go to our Vincentian parishes and not see any reflection of that Vincentian charism whether it be a simple statue of Saint Vincent de Paul or whether it be the image of the Immaculate Conception of the Miraculous Medal who is our patron or any mention whatsoever of that which is essential to our own Vincentian Marian devotion through novenas to the Virgin Mary of the Miraculous Medal or highlighting the different celebrations of the saints of the Vincentian Family.

With regard to the formation dimension of the Final Document, the young people truly want to be formed in the spirit of our Vincentian charism. That is a grave responsibility on the part of the moderators and so in order to encourage a deepening of the importance of that role of accompaniment, we have decided to promote a international meeting in 2014 of moderators of the Vincentian Marian Youth where members of the Congregation of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity and lay people who accompany our young people will be encouraged to participate.

I want to point out again, as I have done on a number of occasions to both the Daughters of Charity and the members of the Congregation of the Mission, that the Vincentian Marian Youth is not an independent youth movement within the Church, but it is an apostolate within the Congregation of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity. We have an obligation to accompany these young people and deepen the attitudes that we have learned from our spiritual founders.

With regard to the specific role of the moderators, a number of years ago we produced a document in Vincentian Marian Youth called the "Role and Functions of Advisors in the JMV." We encourage moderators, both of the Congregation and the Daughters and particularly our lay moderators to deepen their understanding of their responsibility in this accompaniment.

With regard to the dimension of Service and Mission of the Final Document, again there has been a document that was well-developed in the Association called Working in the Form of Projects. We want to encourage all the members of the Association at the national level to come to know more deeply this document that promotes solidarity. During our most recent international council meeting we invited Father Miles Heinen, the Director of the Vincentian Solidarity Office to join us and help us to understand what it means to work together in solidarity one with another. Hopefully the Vincentian Solidarity Office will continue to orient us in how to create and present projects in order to promote systemic change in those whom our young people are serving in their different apostolates.

With regard to the category in the Final Document on the Vincentian Family, there is a desire on the part of the members of the Association to participate actively in the different councils of the Vincentian Family throughout the world. They further that desire by wanting to promote and to share with other branches of the Vincentian Family meetings, formation and concrete projects of service and mission from the perspective of systemic change. They themselves are going to make an effort to promote the book *Seeds of Hope* to help understand better the concept of charity in a contemporary way called Systemic Change as well as to promote the involvement of the members of the Association in a Vincentian International project that we took on in the context of the 350th Anniversary of the deaths of Saint Vincent and Saint Louise, concretely participating in our webpage of ZAFEN, a creole word which means it is our business.

And it is our business to work with and from the reality of the poor. A key piece in this part of the document is the expression that we use in Spanish: “Desembocadura,” which means literally, moving on to the next stage. Our young people realize that they will not always be young and they hope to be able to continue to live the charism, moving on to other branches of the Vincentian Family. It is therefore important, and I say this to all the other branches of the Vincentian Family, to be in a disposition to receive these young people in order that you might help them to continue to foster the living out of the Vincentian charism whether that be in the Congregation of the Mission, the Daughters of Charity, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, the Association of the Miraculous Medal, the Association International of Charities, MISEVI or any of the other branches that are closely linked with out Vincentian charism.

There is a concern on the part of the young people that it becomes difficult to move on because of the generational gaps that exist. Many times the other branches of the Vincentian Family are set in their ways and are not able to understand the ways of thinking and acting of those young people who are maturing and moving on to another

stage in their own lives. So I encourage all the branches of the Vincentian Family to be open to sharing with the young people of the Vincentian Marian Youth how they live out the charism on a day-to-day basis, doing so by formation for them and with them, joint projects of service and mission, simply praying with them and being with them in moments of friendship and love. There is a desire on the part of the young people of the Association to deepen their relationship not only with the Congregation of the Missions and the Daughters of Charity, with whom they feel they have reached a very good level, but also a need to go even deeper in their relationships with other of the lay branches of the Vincentian Family. So that word goes out to all of us who are members of the Vincentian Family to deepen those bonds of relationship with our young people. The young people are going to need our help over these next five years of this new administration to continue to deepen the charism of the Vincentian Marian Youth. They hope to be able to do it in a number of different ways.

The final category of the Final Document of the General Assembly deals with Self-Sufficiency economically speaking. We all know that the Vincentian Marian Youth is economically dependent, many times, on the Congregation of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity, not only at the local levels but at the international level. The young people are very grateful for this financial support that they receive from particularly these branches of the Vincentian Family, but they do have a true desire to become more self sufficient. A number of years ago we began to establish a patrimonial fund, or an endowment fund, and it is beginning to build financial stability in order to help respond to the needs of the Association, at least at the international level. One of the weak points of the Association has been the different national associations being faithful in paying a very modest fee that has been asked of them. We thought that the support of one dollar or one euro from each of the members of the Association would be more than adequate to help to sustain the endowment fund and the works of the Association; and yet it is not possible to receive that even minimal amount from many of the places where the Association is established. We recognize in the Association that we failed to solicit help from the ex-members of the Association. Truly one would think that if the Association has meant something to young persons in their lives, helping transform their way of living, that once they enter into another stage of life they would be more than willing to contribute financially so that the project might continue. Yet, the ex-membership of the Association does not have a tradition of helping at the national level much less at the international level of the Association. So we have a project to continue to work on our self sufficiency and doing so with the help of the orientation of the Vincentian Solidarity Office of the Congregation of the Mission.

There will be sessions of formation for the young people:

- In 2011, the highlight is going to be the gathering of the Vincentian Youth prior to the World Youth Day in August in Madrid.
- In 2012 there will be international meetings in Ecuador for all of Latin America, as well as in Europe, the place is yet to be decided.
- In 2013 we hope to have international meetings on the continent of Africa as well as the continent of Asia.
- And as mentioned earlier, in 2014 the major international event will be of the moderators either in Rome or Paris.
- In 2015 we will have our Fourth General Assembly of our Vincentian Marian Youth.

I close this message, my brothers and sisters, you the members of the Vincentian Family, as I speak about a very dynamic and creative dimension of our Vincentian Family which is the Vincentian Marian Youth. They are our young people and they need our support, our encouragement, our witness and our love as together we, as a family, walk with our lords and masters, the poor. I pray that all that we do be for the greater honour and glory of our God who loves us and calls us to love one another.

Your brother in Saint Vincent,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "G. Gregory Gay, C.M." The signature is fluid and cursive, with the initials "G." and "C.M." clearly visible.

G. Gregory Gay, C.M.
Superior General

LENTEN LETTER

Ash Wednesday, 9 March 2011

To all the Members of the Vincentian Family

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

May the grace and peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ fill your hearts now and forever!

As I write this Lenten Letter for 2011 I am very conscious of the fruits of the Jubilee Year that we celebrated, the 350th anniversary of the deaths of Saint Vincent and Saint Louise. Hopefully it was a year that we were able to deepen our relationship with God, with one another as a Vincentian Family, and particularly with our lords and masters the poor.

As we know, Lent is a time of intense scrutiny of our own relationships, ever conscious of our own limitations and faults. Above all it is a time for us to reach out for healing, including to God, in order that our hearts might be filled once again to overflowing with His compassion.

Recently I participated in a special workshop that the Community of Sant'Egidio holds for Bishops and friends of Sant'Egidio. The founder of this wonderful lay movement, Andrea Riccardi, opened the gathering with a talk directed to all of its participants but particularly to the Bishops as pastors of the Church. He used Pope John Paul II as a model for Bishops. The main point of his sharing was the example that John Paul gave with regard to being a man of encounters, particularly his encounter with God and his encounter with the poor. It is interesting that the Bishops present, in the comments made, were edified by this simple but profound reflection. I myself was edified, but reflected on the fact that in essence it was nothing that we did not already know. It is something that Jesus Christ himself has taught us; and as His followers we are called to imitate Him in this unique relationship with the Father as well as imitate His reaching out in meeting the marginalized of society.

Certainly our own founder Saint Vincent de Paul, calls us to this encounter with God saying "Give me a man of prayer and he will be

capable of all things”¹. He calls us into that deep relationship with the Father that Jesus Himself had. Saint Vincent also shares with us “that true religion we find among the poor”²; in other words, that deep encounter with God is also experienced in our encounter with the poor. And as Saint Vincent clearly tells us, among them we find our salvation. I ask that we, as members of the Vincentian Family, examine this two-fold relationship with God and with the poor in this Lenten season.

Recently I heard a song that is common among young people today which reflects on the need to bow our heads in prayer, especially as we look around and see the world of those who suffer today. A title of yet another song is “Born This Way,” the latest single of Lady Gaga, which is an anthem for the marginalized. One of the verses reads, “Whether life’s disabilities left you outcast, bullied or teased, rejoice and love yourself today, because baby you were born this way.” I am particularly touched to see how many young people focus their attention, rather than on themselves, on the needs of those who are poor as we too look closely at our world and all the different situations of suffering.

Let us focus especially on our relationship with the poor. I would like to speak about a number of situations that I have observed in my visits as Superior General to the different places where the Vincentian Family is serving and evangelizing. It struck me, and I have said this on a number of other occasions, that in every society there is a particular group singled out as what we call “scapegoats.” They are the ones most looked down upon; they are the outcasts from their own society. I find this experience to be true in every continent. In my most recent visit to Ethiopia, our Bishop confrere Markos spoke to me of a group of people that the confreres and Daughters of Charity minister to who are considered outcasts in the society of Ethiopia, who have a long-standing history of being looked down upon and discriminated against not only by those with whom they live day in and day out, but often by the authorities of the society. I had this same experience in Vietnam, in India, in the Congo, and even in first-world countries, as here in Italy. Just recently the whole Italian society’s eyes were opened to the horrible plight of the gypsies that abound in the city of Rome and live in situations that are inhuman. Four children were burned to death because of the poor conditions in which they are forced to live.

¹ COSTE XI, doc. 67.

² COSTE XII, p. 171.

During a memorial service that was held for these four children, Cardinal Vicario Agostina Vallini spoke strongly in favor of the poor and our need to open our eyes to their reality, especially the reality of the immigrant poor. He challenged all present to examine their consciences, both individually and as a Christian community. Many times immigrant peoples obviously do not want to leave their homeland; but they do so as fugitives from war, from the violence that they experience, from hunger, searching desperately to live in peace and with dignity. There is no doubt that the presence of immigrants in any society creates new problems that oftentimes are complex and we cannot look at in a simplified manner. But as the Cardinal said, we are Christians and we cannot not love and get involved in the lives of those who live in poverty, who are considered among the least of our brothers who are marginalized from our society.

The Cardinal spoke of them as the real presence of Jesus Christ. When hearing that, how clearly I could see Saint Vincent saying the same thing to us as members of the Vincentian Family, seeing Christ in the poor, especially among the most abandoned poor. Today my brothers and sisters, we are challenged to see and respond to these poor: the homeless, street children, prisoners, immigrants, those suffering from gender inequality, discrimination against women, the trafficking of women and children both for sex and for work purposes and children soldiers, which is a theme that at another time I would like to develop at greater length. For me it is incredible that our society uses young children to carry weapons, to continue the battles of people who seek only their own political interests and desires. What are we doing to defend the lives of these innocent children? It is horrible to see them carrying weapons that weigh as much as they may weigh and that can take the lives of others as innocent as they are. The Cardinal also said in his homily that before all types of poverty, whether they be old forms of poverty or new forms of poverty that we find that surrounds us in our cities, we should bend our knees and ask God for pardon, pardon of God and pardon of them for what we have not been able to do for them.

Many times in seeing the situation of marginalized people, the outcasts, which I have written about in previous letters, there is a joy that I feel in my heart to see that the Vincentian Family is in one way or another serving their needs and reaching out to them with the love God has placed in their hearts for the poor. In this Lenten season, we need to raise the question: Are we doing all that we can for those who are cast out from our societies?

In the Final Document of the General Assembly of the Congregation of the Mission we state that "Seeing what the Lord has done and is doing through us, we, in the manner of Saint Vincent, would like to do and be more for the poor." Would that this be a challenge for all of

us of the Vincentian Family in this Lenten season — to do more and be more for the poor and with the poor.

I also ask us to focus on the poor in situations of desperation as victims in the midst of violence and mob destruction as we have witnessed in places throughout northern Africa recently: in Tunisia, Algeria, Libya and Egypt among some of the more significant situations. It is the poor who have cried out to have their needs heard. In the midst of the deafness of those responsible for caring for the common good, the suffering and the frustration, as well as the anger can no longer be contained and in “this bursting forth” God speaks. How do we, how can we, respond?

Another locus of where the poor are often found is in the conflicts that arise among religions, particularly when the expression of the religions is in its lowest fundamentalist form. I think of the many so-called “religious” wars and how often in God’s name violence and destruction have been brought about. Oftentimes it has been because of the inability of the human beings involved in these conflicts to sit down and dialog in an open way looking for peaceful solutions rather than resorting to conflict and violence and war.

In that encounter offered by Sant’Egidio, I had the opportunity to listen to a Muslim leader who spoke to us about the importance of living not just in a culture of tolerance of one of another, but the need to move beyond that to the development of a culture of acceptance, respecting one another for who we are, for the faith that we express, trying to understand clearly our own faith and the faith of others. It is something that is needed to be done on both sides of conflict situations.

It is all about building good trusting relationships that can come about in and through dialog. As followers of Jesus Christ in this time of Lent we are called to reflect deeply on attitudes that oftentimes divide us. Ignorance in itself is one of the root causes of fundamentalist attitudes where the search is many times for one’s own particular interests rather than for the common good of all. A ready solution that the Christian world has offered to this ignorance is education. This Muslim speaker said very clearly that where Christians have provided good, human, value-oriented education, the relationships between peoples, both Muslims and Christians, is much better. Education is a key and those of the Vincentian Family who are involved in education should reflect deeply on this ministry that we are providing and in this time of Lent to see if it is an education that is doing its utmost to provide a formation that is integral, a formation that helps people to build values, values that bring people together in relationships of understanding and caring.

Besides ignorance, there is also the challenge of fear that many times paralyzes people, keeping them from moving out of the themselves toward others in good, healthy, harmonious relationships. The gift of Jesus Christ in and through his death and resurrection that is at the heart of what Lent is about, gives us not only a sign, but the grace, the courage to be able to break down all fear. It is God's love for His own Son that was able to conquer death and to break the paralyzing attitude of fear, enabling His Son to rise to new life in the Resurrection. It is the same gift of the resurrection, the same gift of God's love that was poured out upon His Son and which His Son poured out on the entire world, which gives us the courage to move forward and to build relationships.

My brothers and sisters, let me summarize by saying that the Lord speaks loudly to us in the cries of those who are poor. Can we do more? Can we be more? Let us examine our actions of solidarity with those who live in poverty. Let us refresh and be creative in deepening our relationship with those who are poor, walking with them as advocates for what is just and right. Just as we are called to be one with the poor and in solidarity with all humanity as we work toward a world of peace, we are called at the same time to be one with God who is the source of all life and love. Let us ever be mindful that we are called to act with justice for peace and the integrity of all creation, motivated by that which is at the heart of our vocation as Vincentians, the charity of Christ crucified. Let this gift that we have received through our Vincentian vocation, a gift which is a concrete expression of God's love for all of us, be at the heart of what purifies us and reconciles us and makes us anew as we celebrate this Lenten season, culminating in the great gift of new life in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Let Alleluia be our song for we are an Easter people.

Your brother in Saint Vincent,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "G. Gregory Gay, C.M." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "G" and a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

G. Gregory Gay, C.M.
Superior General

TEMPO FORTE CIRCULAR
(7-11 March 2011)

Rome, 22 March 2011

To the Members of the Congregation of the Mission

May the grace and peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ fill your hearts now and forever!

1. We began our *tempo forte* meeting discussing a number of issues that we will be dealing with over the next couple of years:
 - The **New Visitors meeting** planned for 2012 which we hope to revamp and give a new look. The coordinators that we have chosen for 2012 are Claudio Santangelo and Stanislav Zontak;
 - An ongoing discussion on how to **revamp the canonical visit** of the provinces in these next six years of our administration;
 - **Updating of our catalog** on line. The process is going to take some time, but we hope that it will be in place for this year;
 - The Superior General gave an updated report on the confrere, Father Jean-Pierre Mongulu, from the Province of Congo who has been sent to **Haiti** to assist the Vincentian Family in creating projects for our Zafen website. The process of development in Haiti is slow, yet, our efforts as a Vincentian Family both internationally and locally are moving ahead;
 - An updated report on the **Ratio** that we hope to develop regarding parishes. We are still expecting from the provinces the response to the survey that Father Eli Chaves and Father Stanislav Zontak sent out regarding our parish reality.
2. Curia business
 - We named a **new Director of Communications, Father John Maher**, from the Province of Philadelphia. A curriculum vitae is being prepared to share with the Visitors and the Congregation. He will be the director not only of *Vincentiana* and *Nuntia*, but also responsible for revamping cmglobal. I want to thank Father Julio Suescun for all that he has done to help improve communications in the worldwide Vincentian Community. He will be returning to his province of origin, Zaragoza, at the beginning of April.

- A report from the Vicar General **on the Statutes**. At this time, the Statutes have been redacted in Italian, the original language. The team is planning a meeting, and from there the text will be translated into the different languages.
 - The activities of **SIIEV**: Among them is a proposal from one of its members, Eugene Curran, for an ongoing formation session in Vincentian Spirituality and History for our young researchers, hopefully in 2012. The project will be offered in two different sessions, one each semester.
 - Formation: Following a mandate from the General Assembly, we formed a Commission for the **Creation of a new Ratio Formationis**. The members of the Commission are the following: Orlando Escobar, coordinator, Province of Colombia; Jerry Luttenberger, Eastern Province USA; Joy Thuruthel, Province of Southern India; Negasi Ghirmazion, Province of Justin de Jacobis; Robert Petrovsek, Province of Slovenia; and Jan Martincek, Province of Cyril and Methodius. Their first meeting will be 4 June. They will be accompanied by the Assistant responsible for initial and ongoing formation, Stanislav Zontak.
 - Different members of the General Council are participating in an ongoing formation offered by the Claretians in conjunction with the Union of Superiors General for helping members of General Councils to learn their roles. Father Javier Alvarez participated in a workshop from 12-13 March on a topic dealing with *Confreses in Difficult Situations*.
 - A report from the Coordinator of the **Commission on Islam**, Claudio Santangelo. The workshop is being planned for August 2011 in Indonesia, open to all the members of the Vincentian Family, dealing with the relationship between Christians and Muslims. I encourage all Visitors to consider the possibility of having *confreses* participate in this most important session that is not only significant for those provinces that are in predominately Muslim areas, but also for provinces in which there is an increasing Muslim population as experienced in many parts of Western Europe.
 - We named a **new administrator to the General Curia** who will be replacing Father Mario Grossi. He is Giuseppe Carulli from the Province of Naples. I take this opportunity to thank in a very special way, Father Mario Grossi for his most generous service. He will be with us in the Curia until the end of June prior to returning to his province of origin, Turin.
3. A report from the team of the **Vincentian Solidarity Office**. The Director Miles Heinen and his associates, Mr. Scott Fina and

Ms Teresa Niedda were present to introduce themselves to us and the different projects that each of them is involved in. They have been helping to raise money for our Zafen project and they are undertaking with great concern the development of our Patrimonial Funds as well as continuing to deal with agencies when requests for different projects of the provinces arise.

4. The last **economic report** given by our Econome General, Father John Gouldrick. Present with him was the new Econome General, Father Joseph Geders. We did some pre-preparation for the Mission Distribution Fund as well as review of the budget for the operations of the Congregation of the Mission. Budgets were approved from the different international missions as well as the budget for the local community. I take this opportunity to thank Father John Gouldrick for his service as Econome General these last four years. He returns to his province of origin, Eastern Province USA.
5. A report from Father Eli Chaves, the Assistant responsible for the **Vincentian Family**. He presented the plan of action for the new Vincentian Family team of Father Juventino Castellero, Sister Ana Aparaceda and Father Eli Chaves dos Santos. One of the major thrusts of the Vincentian Family's new plan is to involve all the members of the General Council in the promotion of the relationship of the Congregation of Mission with the other branches of the Vincentian Family.
The new team of the Vincentian Family is interested in working together with those responsible for the web page famvin.org. They will help support the promotion of a project for Vincentian leaders, which the Superior General has undertaken with people from different branches of the Vincentian Family.
6. Father John Freund of the **web page** has begun to develop a plan of action that coincides with the *Lines of Action* of the General Assembly document. Forthcoming will be another communication from the Superior General as to how that project might be implemented in different ways and for different purposes such as initial and ongoing formation, and the improvement of communication at all levels.
7. From the **representative at the United Nations**, Father Joseph Foley. In his report, he highlighted for us three areas: the Commission for Social Development, the World Interfaith Harmony Week, and the work of the NGO Committee on Mining. A brief aspect of each of those developments:
 - The permanent representative for the Social Development Commission emphasized how a new model for social

development needs to be created, one that is human-centered. The aim is to achieve social justice through social inclusion, equity and active participation of the peoples.

- The first week in February of each year is known as World Harmony Week and it aims to encourage governments to promote that harmony among all peoples regardless of their faith. One of the things discussed was the importance of weakening the impact of extremists and strengthening the authentic and moderate voice of the religious traditions. 87% of the people of the world belong to some form of religious community. Religion is the second largest infrastructure in the world.
- The NGO working group on mining: The Commission on Sustainable Development has made it clear that while the resources produced from mining are often necessary for modern life, and while people in mining communities need jobs, mining practices show little regard for people or the environment. In most parts of the world conflicts between corporations and local communities, especially communities living on indigenous lands, are usually resolved through violence and bribery. This Committee attempts to address the environmental, economic, health and social impacts of mining.

Father Foley asks if there are confreres involved in development work, interfaith dialog and cooperation or mining, he would be happy to know who they are in order to work together with them.

8. A report from our **CIF** directors, Father Marcelo Manimtim and Father José Carlos Fonsatti:
 - In order to try to reduce costs and at the same time intensify the work of the ongoing formation sessions, the team of CIF has reduced the three-month session to two months, which will be done on an experimental basis.
 - Besides the two-month session, this year there will be held a one-month heritage session designed for older confreres where the emphasis is not so much on input that they get from conferences, but on sharing experiences which older confreres have in greater depth and richness.
 - The special program that they will have this year is the Servant Leadership Session for local superiors or future superiors.
 - In the next years they hope to do other sessions on topics such as formation, popular missions, special session for Eastern Europe and other developments, specifically for the Vincentian Family. At this time I put out a request to all the confreres who read this circular. If there are topics of particular interest that

should be treated in the CIF session and that are not handled by the Conferences of Visitors and/or Provinces or in other ongoing formation session in different places, please feel free to let the directors of CIF know, or directly the Curia, addressing your comments to Father Stanislav Zontak, our link with the CIF team in Paris.

- The Superior General sent out a letter a number of months ago making a request for scholarship funds. We hope that the provinces see ongoing formation as an essential part of who we are, as was clearly stated in our final document of the General Assembly, and we ask that they continue to be generous in helping to support confreres who are coming from developing countries who find it very expensive to travel and pay room and board in the Western part of the world.
9. Information received regarding the **Conferences of Visitor and/or Provinces.**
- The Assembly of **CEVIM** will be held in Celje, Slovenia 2-6 May. Part of the focus of the sessions will be on ongoing formation, the renewal of the *Ratio Formationis*, reconfiguration and the final document of the General Assembly. From the General Curia both Father Stanislav Zontak and Father Javier Alvarez will be participating.
 - **CLAPVI:** a report was given following the session on the school of Vincentian Spirituality held in Curitiba 16 January - 11 February. Eleven confreres from different Provinces in Latin America participated.
 - **COVIAM:** the discussion focused mostly on the new mission that COVIAM will be initiating in Chad beginning Palm Sunday with two confreres, one from the Province of Nigeria and the other from the Province of Paris-Cameroon.
 - A report from the **APVC** included the schedule of their annual meeting which will be held 14-18 March. Present at the meeting was the General Assistant Father Varghese Thottamkara. Attending are not only the provinces of the Asia-Pacific area, but the regional superior of Vietnam as well as representatives from Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea. The assembly was held in Manila, Philippines.
10. With regard to our **international missions:**
- We are happy to announce the arrival of a new missionary in the mission in **El Alto**, Bolivia, Father Emilio Torres, having reported to this mission on 1 March and joining the other three members of that mission, Cyril DeNanteuil, Diego Pla and Aidan Rooney, the superior of the mission.

- We received word that Father Jorge Manrique will join the team in **Cochabamba**, Bolivia, of Father David Paniagua, and Superior Father Joel Vasquez.
- In the **Solomon Islands** we have received regular communication from the mission superior, Father Greg Walsh. The members of that community, Victor Bieler, Flaviano Caintic, Ivica Gregurec and Augustinus Marsup have been joined by Father Raul Castro from the Province of Argentina and Father Tewolde Teclemicael of the Province of Justin de Jacobis. At this time, Father Simon Kaipuram, from the India North is there teaching scripture for two and a half months. There is a new confrere from the Province of Nigeria, Joachin Nwaorgu, who is next to arrive in the mission together with Father Agus Setyono from the Province of Indonesia who is currently in Australia studying English. I take this opportunity to thank Father Drago, from the Province of Slovenia who regularly is present in the Solomon Islands giving classes and at the same time working to collect funds to support the mission there.
- **Papua New Guinea:** We received a report from Father Homero Marin, the mission superior, working together with Father Justin Eke and Father Vladimir Malota. Two other confreres are waiting now for their visas, Father Emmanuel LaPaz from the Philippines and Father Georges Maylaa from the Province of the Orient. Eventually another confrere from the Province of Nigeria, Father Jude Lemeh will join them.
- The Superior General, together with his Council have opened a **new international mission** on an experimental basis in Tunisia in the city of **Tunis**. In September, two confreres will begin that mission. They are Father Firmin Mola, Congolese from the Province of Toulouse, presently working in Algiers and Brother Henry Escurel, Province of the Philippines. The mission presently is being manned by a member of the province of Toulouse, Father Jordi Llambrich who will help the confreres transition in to this new apostolic experience in a country very much a part of our Vincentian heritage. The Cathedral of Tunis is named St. Vincent de Paul. In my visit to the Cathedral, I saw that the cupola is a painting of St. Vincent in heaven with the missionaries to his left and the Daughters of Charity to his right, serving in the center the slaves of the area of Tunis.

11. **Other missionary news:**

- A recent volunteer is a confrere from Madagascar, Father Sedy Rabarijaona, who will be joining the Province of Puerto Rico to help serve the Haitian population.

- We have taken into consideration a letter from Archbishop Tomash Peta from Astana, Kazakhstan requesting missionaries.
 - We also studied the requests of two confreres who wish to volunteer for missions.
12. We reviewed our calendars from now until the next *tempo forte*. Here I will mention briefly the **commitments of the Superior General**:
- in March at the meeting of the National Conference of Visitors in the United States (29-30);
 - in April visit to the two international missions in Bolivia, El Alto and Cochabamba (8-15);
 - Holy Week in a city in southwest Missouri in the United States with a Latin American community (17-24);
 - visit to the Vice-Province of Cyril and Methodius, the Ukraine, Belarus and Siberia (28 April - 15 May);
 - ongoing formation with the Daughters of Charity in Paris (19-21 May);
 - the new mission of COVIAM in Chad and the community of Daughters of Charity as well as the confreres in Central Africa (23-30 May);
 - the *tempo forte* meeting (June 6-10 June);
 - the beatification of Sister Marguerite Rutan in Dax, France (18-20 June).

I close this circular asking that we all might join in solidarity with different situations of unrest, violence and destruction caused by humans or natural sources: in northern Africa, particularly in Egypt and Libya and for the many victims of the earthquake/tsunami/nuclear fallout in Japan. As members of the Congregation of the Mission we look to respond to the needs of those most vulnerable.

I take the opportunity to wish you all a fruitful Lent and a life-giving Easter season.

Your brother in Saint Vincent,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "G. Gregory Gay, C.M." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

G. Gregory Gay, C.M.
Superior General

Echoes of the
350th
Anniversary

Introduction

Julio Suescun Olcoz, C.M.

Director of VINCENTIANA

The 350th anniversary of the death of Saint Vincent and Saint Louise has been highly publicized and as a result it will remain engraved in our memory for a long time to come. VINCENTIANA wants to help keep the memory of all that we experienced during the Jubilee Year alive so that its fruits of grace, creative fidelity and effective commitment might become more deeply rooted in us as we continue to serve the poor *our lords and masters*.

As we could not do this in any other way, this number of VINCENTIANA contains the words of Pope Benedict XVI addressed to us on the occasion of the 350th Anniversary, given at the Angelus Sunday, September 26, 2010, as well as the letter of the Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission and that of the Superioress General of the Daughters of Charity.

As we do in each edition, so now in this present edition we bring together the letters of the Superior General that were addressed to the Congregation of the Mission or the whole Vincentian Family, letters that draw attention to specific areas of our life or that point out aspects of the Christian journey that we have undertaken in communion with the whole Church. Thus VINCENTIANA highlights two events that occurred during 2010: the XLI General Assembly of the Congregation of the Mission and the worldwide celebration that enabled us to express our gratitude for the gifts that the Lord has given to us through the creative collaboration of our Founders.

VINCENTIANA published in 2010 an extraordinarily large edition that made the various presentations of the General Assembly available to our readers. We return once again to this event in order not to add something new but rekindle the fire that was ignited at the time of the Assembly. At that gathering the Congregation recognized the fact that God continues to call us through the voice of the poor and therefore the delegates made a decision to lay out paths of creative fidelity to

the mission in lines of actions that have to be continually renewed. The lived experience of a General Assembly, especially one like our previous assembly that was focused on listening and silent reflection on the reality, can never be adequately transcribed on paper. We can only hope that we can hear the echoes of what occurred during those days.

This edition of *VINCENTIANA* also focuses on a second event: the family celebration, which was more universal than ever before and went beyond our most optimistic expectations in uniting the whole family throughout the world in an incredible collaborative effort which united us to our Founders. The idea of involving everyone in the celebration and in various commitments was greatly appreciated by all the members of the Vincentian Family. Again the words that we write here as we gather together the various communications that were sent to the Secretary General of the Congregation of the Mission are not simply commemorative words that echo the many activities that occurred during the past year. Indeed, our celebration was much more than that for it touched the Vincentian world in a profound manner and hopefully, we will continue to reap fruit.

Translation: CHARLES T. PLOCK, C.M.

The Word of the Pope at the Angelus

Sunday, September 26, 2010

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

In this Sunday's Gospel (Lk 16:19-31), Jesus tells the parable of the rich man and poor Lazarus. The former lives in luxury and egoism and when he dies, he will go to hell. The poor man on the contrary eats the food left over from the table of the rich man, and at his death he will be brought by angels to his eternal dwelling place with God and the saints. "Blessed are you poor," the Lord proclaimed to his disciples, "for yours is the Kingdom of God" (Lk 6:20). But the message of the parable goes further. It reminds us that while we are in this world we should listen to the Lord who speaks through the Sacred Scriptures and to live according to his will, otherwise after death it will be too late to repent. This parable teaches us two lessons: the first is that God loves the poor and comforts their humiliation; the second is that our eternal destiny is conditioned by our attitude, it is up to us to follow the path that God has laid out for us in order to attain life and this path is love, not intended as a feeling but as service to others in the charity of Christ.

By a happy coincidence, tomorrow we shall be celebrating the Liturgical Memorial of St Vincent de Paul, Patron of Catholic charities, on the 350th anniversary of his death. In 16th-century France, he himself keenly perceived the strong contrast between the richest and the poorest of people. In fact, as a priest, he had the opportunity to experience the aristocratic life and life in the country, as well as the dregs of society in Paris. Encouraged by the love of Christ, Vincent de Paul knew how to organize permanent forms of service for marginalized people, giving life to the so-called "*Charités*" and "*Charities*," that is the groups of women who gave their time and belongings to the most marginalized people. Some of these volunteers chose to consecrate themselves completely to God and to the poor, with St Louise de Marillac, and St Vincent, Founder of the "Daughters of Charity" the first female congregation to live a consecrated life "in the world," with the common people, including the sick and the needy.

Dear friends, only Love with a capital “L” can bring true happiness! This is shown by another witness, a young girl who was proclaimed Blessed yesterday in Rome. I am speaking of Chiara Badano, an Italian girl born in 1971, who was afflicted by a disease that caused her death just before she turned 19. Despite her suffering, she was a ray of light [*luce*] as her nickname suggests “Chiara Luce.” Her parish, the Diocese of Acqui Termini and the Focolare Movement to which she belonged, are rejoicing today and it is indeed a celebration for all young people who can discover in her an example of Christian devotion. Fully accepting the will of God, she spoke her last words: “Bye Mum. Be happy because I am.” Let us praise God because his love is stronger than evil and death. Let us thank the Virgin Mary, who leads youth, through difficulty and suffering, to love Jesus and to discover the beauty of life.

OFFICIAL VATICAN TRANSLATION

Letter of His Holiness the Pope Benedict XVI



To Reverend Father Gregory Gay,
Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission
and to Reverend Evelyne Franc,
Superioress General of the Company of the Daughters of Charity

“Whoever loves God, must also love his brother” (1 Jn 4:21). With these words of the Apostle John, I would like to join in thought and prayer the entire Vincentian Family, as it celebrates in thanksgiving the three hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the death of Saint Louise de Marillac and of Saint Vincent de Paul. These words were lived out in a luminous way in the lives of your Founders.

It is because they believed in love that they put themselves at the service of their brothers and sisters. May this same faith be your light and strength in your ways of service to the most abandoned and lowly in our so often heartless societies!

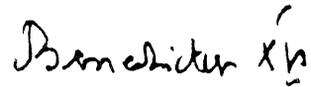
By placing this jubilee under the motto **“Charity and Mission,”** you have indeed wished to indicate what is at the heart of the heritage which you have received. As I wrote in my first encyclical, saints like Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac **“remain distinguished models of social charity for all people of good will. The saints truly enlighten history, because they are men and women of faith, hope and love”** (*Deus caritas est*, n. 40). This is what I encourage you to be in a daring way amongst the men and women of our time, so that your involvements in favour of the

human person be in fact a revelation of the love of God and not simply the expression of humanism or philanthropy.

The intuition of Vincent de Paul in getting priests, consecrated persons and laity to work together is a precious good that the Vincentian family rightly engages itself to develop for a better service of the Church's mission. So you will be ever more effective in proclaiming the Gospel to all, so that each person might recover their dignity as children of God in the world, in unity and solidarity. May God help you to remain always faithful to the heritage you have received and to live it out with faith and generosity!

Entrusting you to the intercession of Saint Vincent de Paul, of Saint Louise de Marillac and of all the saints and blessed of the Vincentian Family, I give you all with a full heart an affectionate Apostolic Blessing.

From the Vatican, 14 June 2010

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Benedictus XVI". The script is cursive and elegant, with a prominent flourish at the end of the "XVI".

XLI General Assembly of the Congregation of the Mission

Creative Fidelity to the Mission

Erminio Antonello, C.M.

June 28, 2010 marked the beginning of the General Assembly of the Congregation of the Mission. It took place in Paris where everything vibrates with memories of Saint Vincent and his first collaborators. One hundred sixteen Missionaries from forty-five provinces and four vice-provinces participated in the Assembly. The objective of the Assembly was to give new vitality to the missionary dimension of the confreres and this was expressed in the motto of the Assembly: *Creative fidelity to the mission*. In the opening homily that was preached by the Superior General the Missionaries were given some indications as to how they might accomplish this objective: *As Jesus became poor, we are called to become poor, poor with the poor. Not that we are called to share their same misery, but rather to feel their misery, to show our solidarity.... God continually leads us to the poor. That is our vocation. That is why the Spirit of the Lord has come upon us. We have been anointed to bring glad tidings to the poor. We pray that in this General Assembly we let it be the Spirit of the Lord Jesus that leads us to an ever greater commitment as brothers, united in the evangelization and service of the poor*. In fact, one of the characteristic aspects of this Assembly consisted of listening to the voices of the poor as the participants viewed videos that presented in a vivid way the suffering that these women and men endured in different parts of the world. Many of these videos, in their simplicity and immediacy, made present in the assembly hall profound and deep feelings. The presentation of the videos was followed by a time of silence which provided an opportunity to the members of the Assembly to internalize what they had just seen and heard. The delegates then engaged in a dialogue.

The dialogue was very diverse but focused on several themes. The first theme was systemic change which must be engaged in if the Missionaries want to serve the poor in an effective manner. Father Maloney, CM explained that in order to be faithful to the Constitutions that invite the Missionaries to reflect on the root causes of poverty it

is important to engage in the process of systemic change in order that the poor might be lifted out of misery. When involved in the process of systemic change one attempts to act in a way that promotes the human dignity of those persons who are poor. Two initiatives in this area of systemic change were presented to the members of the Assembly: a project of the Vincentian Family in Italy, *Water, a drop for life* and the microfinance project in Haiti that was established to assist one of the poorest societies in the world ... this initiative has been called *Zafen* which means *it is our business*. More information about this initiative can be found at <http://zafen.org>

Another theme that was focused on during the second round table discussion was that of on-going formation. It is said that the mission depends on the zeal of the Missionaries who are the most precious treasure of the Congregation. Therefore on-going formation has to be a primary task that each Missionary accepts responsibility for. Personal formation must be dynamic and communal so that said formation can influence the internal dynamics of the community and thus enrich each of its members. Also the unity of the community enables its members to confront the secularized and global culture of our era.

A third round table discussion enabled the participants to reflect on the problem of *reconfiguration* of the provinces, a reality that we must face because of our fewer numbers. This was a delicate theme which created, however, much discussion. In summary it was felt that the general direction must be one that favors an attitude of collaboration among provinces that are geographically, culturally and historically related to one another, thus leading them to undertake initiatives that commit everyone to future generations.

The message that the Pope sent to the Assembly was delivered by Cardinal Tarsicio Bertone and can be summarized in the following four points: 1. the missionary spirit means *a)* that we allow ourselves to be filled with the Spirit of Jesus Christ; *b)* that especially during this year of the priest we continue to be faithful to the formation of priests; *c)* that we have a great concern for the missions *ad gentes*; *d)* the we always be enflamed with the charity of our Founder who invites us to *run to the spiritual needs of our neighbor as if we were running to a fire* (CCD XI, 25).

The members of the Assembly still faced another week of work in which they would deal with other matters. The deliberations of the Assembly reached their climax with the re-election of the superior general, Father G. Gregory Gay. The unity to the Congregation was revealed as they stood together and gave Father Gregory a prolonged ovation. This applause was followed by the exchange of a fraternal embrace with each one of the delegates and with Mother General, Sister Evelyne Franc and her Council. The following day, Father Javier

Álvarez, director general of the Daughters of Charity, was elected Vicar-General of the Congregation. The election of four Assistants followed and then the delegates returned to their work on other documents and reflections.

The environment of the Assembly was characterized by friendship in which the participants, to use the words of Saint Vincent, *lived together as dear friends*. The message that we, as Visitors and delegates, brought home was that of encouragement to continue to be Missionaries but above all to be zealous Missionaries who proclaim the Good News to the poor and who are able to be signs of the visible presence of the Risen Lord. This was the specific message of the Archbishop of Paris, Cardinal André Vingt-Trois who on July 3rd, the feast of Saint Thomas, said: *the mission for which we are sent is not simply to announce the message of the Gospel, nor even only, the person of Christ. We are charged with making him seen through and in the relations built among the members of his Church. Charity lived in the heart of the community is a constitutive element of the proclamation of the Gospel. It is in seeing how you love each other, that they will understand who it is who has sent you. To take up the missionary dimension of the ties which unite us, avoids closing ourselves in on our internal questions.*

The Assembly is certainly not decisive for the life of the Provinces, but its message is a threshold that should be experienced in order to live out our missionary vocation.

Translation: CHARLES T. PLOCK, C.M.

Presentation of the Documents of the General Assembly 2010¹

Synthesis – Lines of Action 2010-2016

Francisco Javier Álvarez Munguía, C.M.

Vicar General

The General Assembly of 2010 attempted to break with the tradition of recent Assemblies that were focused on producing legal texts or documents that would serve as a guide for the whole Congregation. In presenting the *Consultation Document*, it was stated very clearly that *dialogue* ought to be the primary objective of the General Assembly 2010. In line with these words, all the delegates to the Assembly were told that the *Consultation Document* should not be considered, properly speaking, as a working document but rather should be viewed as a document intended to stimulate dialogue. At the same time, it was said that it was unnecessary to produce a final document. Nevertheless, the Assembly concluded with the approval of two documents. I do not think that this fact contradicts in any way the orientation that was clearly given to the delegates.

It is certain that the members of the Assembly did not consume their energy in the formulation of these documents. To be exact, *The Lines of Action, 2010-2016* was redacted during the final days of the Assembly as the natural result of all the debates, dialogue and presentations that took place during the Assembly and as the result of all the preparation that took place in the domestic and provincial assemblies. The *Synthesis* was redacted by a commission of three Missionaries who were not delegates to the Assembly.

¹ From the month of October until the present, a time has been set aside during each meeting of the general council in order to continue our dialogue and sharing on the content of the Assembly documents. We hope to conclude this reflection during the month of June or July. Even though I gather together in this article some of the reflections that have been shared during the meetings of the council, this article is not meant to be an official interpretation of the documents.

THE SYNTHESIS AND THE LINES OF ACTION: SOME SIMILARITIES AND SOME DIFFERENCES

In general, the content of these two documents is very similar. If someone were to read these two documents without knowing that they refer to the same Assembly, that person could easily conclude that the documents deal with the same theme or make reference to the same reality. In fact, such is the case, but we also note that the documents are written in two different styles. *The Lines of Action* is more schematic and academic while the *Synthesis* is more familiar in tone and style. Yet the documents complement one another. We might ask: in what way does this occur? Without leaving aside the content, the *Synthesis* communicates to us the environment and the life that was created by the delegates. We are told, for example, that the delegates desired an environment of *dialogue and an interchange of ideas*. It was also stated *the liturgical celebrations and prayers... not only enrich[ed] our coming together but also guid[ed] our reflections* (#2) and the videos which were shown each day at the beginning of the first morning session had a profound impact on the delegates.

As the title indicates, the *Synthesis* attempts to present an instant photograph of the Assembly, that is, a portrait drawn by three observers who were on the margin of the debates. The language is explanatory rather than intentional, more incisive and questioning, especially in the first part, and therefore less academic. Perhaps citing some phrases will suffice to corroborate what we are saying here: *we are wounded healers* (#4); *we want to be attentive to the poor in extreme situation of poverty* (#4); *we, in the manner of Saint Vincent, would like to do and be "more" for the poor* (#6); *all our persons and our possessions belong to the poor* (#7), *we are evangelized by the very poor whom we serve*, etc.

I do not know if this was intended, but the *Synthesis* is structured in the vocational style of call-response, a style which we are very familiar with not only because we have seen it so often in the Scriptures but also because we have experienced this in our own lives. In fact, the first part of the *Synthesis* is entitled: *The Lord calls in the cry of the poor*. God has spoken to us in all the words that were uttered and heard in the assembly hall and this includes the videos about the life of the poor, the various messages and communications, the debates and the round-table discussions. In the second part of the document (beginning with #7) the responses of the Assembly and the whole Congregation are gathered together... responses that we hope to make during the next six years. Call and response: here we have an old but always new format which God makes use of in order to call us or point out a path that we should follow.

The document, *The Lines of Action*, takes on the form of a plan for life, a plan that provides a clear orientation for the future of the Congregation or, as stated in the document, *for the Congregation of the future*. Here there are no ambiguities; what the delegates wanted to say is expressed in a very clear and direct manner. In dividing this document into three parts the members of the Assembly focused on the theme that was used in convoking the Assembly: *creative fidelity to the mission*. Each one of these sections employs the classical methodology of *see, judge and act* and begins with a biblical citation indicating the place where we find the ultimate foundation of our vocation and our evangelizing mission.

The first part “fidelity” corresponds with *see*. The reality of the past six years is analyzed and this analysis takes into consideration the situation of the world and the Church as it reviews the life of the Congregation from the time of the 2004 General Assembly. Only the positive dimensions are considered since everyone is aware of the negative ones. In this section there was an attempt made to point out the areas where the Congregation had been faithful. In the second part, *creative*, some scriptural texts (for example, Hebrews 13:8; Revelation 2:15) and the Constitutions illuminate and encourage us to go deeper into *our experience of God, our commitment with the poor and our commitment to the formation of priests and the laity and our willingness to embrace our role as prophets...* The third part to *the mission* coincides with *act*. As in previous sections so too this last section begins with a Scripture passage (the passage where Jesus, in the synagogue at Nazareth, proclaims his mission, Luke 4:14-18) and a text from Saint Vincent that reminds us about our mission in the Church. This is sufficient to introduce the five lines of action that form the body of the document.

THE FIVE LINES OF ACTION IN THE TWO DOCUMENTS

As we have said, the five lines of action are developed in the two final documents in different but complementary ways. Some of these lines of action are not very original and give the impression that we are returning once again to the same themes. Nevertheless, it seemed that we had a need to grow on both a personal as well as a community level in all these areas if we are truly serious about entering into a process of *creative fidelity to the mission*. If our reality is viewed from this perspective then the five lines of action have great meaning. Why? Because how can we grow in creative fidelity if we do not also speak about on-going formation and about our ministries and the poor.

Naturally, the orientation of each one of these lines of action is sufficiently general so that each of the provinces can begin to adapt

these without feeling that their legitimate diversity is threatened. The Assembly has certainly not said everything and the documents are by no means exhaustive. Confreres, local communities and provinces will have to assimilate and interpret and own these lines of action; their provincial and local community plans will have to incorporate these lines of action and further spell out their implications. During the Assembly the distinct continental groups made their initial response (the last part of the document), but this was a first step. Now provinces and the local communities must also respond because if the documents do not influence life on these two levels then this document becomes a wasted piece of paper. Therefore it is absolutely necessary that the expressed concerns in the *Lines of Action* are reinforced in the plans of the provinces and the local communities for only in this way will they become a part of the real and concrete lives of the confreres, the local communities and the provinces.

1. Formation (initial and on-going)

I believe that the Assembly saw in this theme one of the keys that will enable us to grow in *creative fidelity to the mission* and also viewed this as the most decisive element in order to clothe ourselves in the lines of action. In fact, unless this need for on-going formation is experienced as a central element of our vocation, it will be difficult to be creative in our ministries, difficult to work on behalf of the poor, difficult to discover and attack the root causes of poverty. On-going formation, understood in its widest meaning, makes us question ourselves and lifts us out of those situations that anesthetize every attempt at creative fidelity. John Paul II understood this when he wrote in *Starting Afresh from Christ* that the desired renewal of the consecrated life cannot be achieved unless on-going formation is taken seriously². The decree *Perfectae Caritatis* stated the same: *the up-to-date renewal of institutes depends very much on the training of the members*³.

Perhaps this is the reason why this theme moved from third place in the *Consultation Document* to the first place in *The Lines of Actions*. Even though the words, *initial formation*, appear in the title, nevertheless, the content of this first line of action refers to on-going formation. The same could be said about the different forms of communication and dialogue, a theme that was discussed in the Assembly. The *Synthesis*, however, only deals with on-going formation.

² Cf. *Starting Afresh from Christ*, 14.

³ *Perfectae Caritatis*, 18.

I believe that the six guidelines that are contained in this section of on-going formation can be summed up in the following way: on-going formation is bound up with the cultivation of the interior life of the missionary. This is clear from some of the expressions that are used here: *the place of the Word of God and Jesus Christ at the center of our life and mission* (1.1); *to strengthen the mystical-prophetic and communal dimensions of our spirituality* (1.2); *to pray and reflect on our experiences and on the living out of our ministry* (1.4). All the guidelines move in the same direction. Without a personal commitment nothing will happen. We have to realize that our vocation is more than work and we need to be motivated and convinced to engage in this process of on-going formation. The power of on-going formation resides in the fact that it can transform us and, as stated so well in the *Synthesis* (#7), it can give us the continued strength to respond to the challenges and the disillusionments that confront every evangelizer on a daily basis. To strengthen the foundation of an edifice is to assure the soundness of the whole structure. Here it would be good to recall the phrase of Saint Vincent: *Give me a man of prayer, and he will be able to do anything* (CCD: XI, 76). Behind these words of Vincent we discover the experience of a whole lifetime. Vincent knew that people were able to walk along a path of transformation because he himself had experienced this transformation. He who began his adult life by searching for financial resources for his own benefit became the apostle of charity.

On-going formation leads to on-going conversion. This would appear to be obvious given the close relationship between formation and the spiritual life. If we discover that we are not engaged in a process of on-going conversion then there is a need to examine our spiritual development. Where there is a fertile spiritual life there also we discover challenges and desires to respond to new calls and an openness to new ministries. Abandonment of on-going formation is bound up with a neglect with regard to the spiritual life because beyond any provincial programs, on-going formation is an attitude that leads us to prepare ourselves, to be careful about and deepen ourselves in the spiritual life, to do this as part of a continuous and on-going process.

The further orientation that is provided by some other parts of this first line of action is perhaps secondary: *to create formation programs* (1.3); *to foster openness to the opportunity offered by new languages and the techniques of the digital world* (1.5); *to foster the interchange of experiences* (1.6)... Obviously all of these are welcome and most necessary if we do not want to be left behind to live in the past century, or even worse to live in the nineteenth century. Therefore, if we focus our attention and energy on language and technique, on theological knowledge and modern methods of evangelization, then we are really not entering into the true spirit of on-going formation. This is a very important point to understand because we must also

acknowledge that languages and techniques and formation programs can lead us to engage in a process of personal and community transformation.

But even before considering this first line of action, an important question must be answered: what can we do to motivate the confreres and local communities in this area of on-going formation that the General Assembly has placed before us as a process that should be highlighted during the next six years? We have spoken so often about on-going formation that immediately one can become indifferent or express a feeling of being tired and frustrated at listening to the same thing over and over again. It is true that the Assembly realized that much was at stake here with regard to creative fidelity. If there is no on-going formation, there is no renewal and without renewal we will not have new communities or creative ministries.

2. Reconfiguration

I will begin this section by recalling something that is evident: this second line of action, like the other four, must be seen in relation to the theme of the Assembly and in relation to the title of the documents. Reconfiguration, therefore, ought to have as its ultimate objective *creative fidelity to the mission*. If this were not so then it would be better not to even speak about this issue. Something similar was expressed by the new provincial of the Western Province of the United States, Father Perry F. Henry, CM in his presentation to the Assembly about the process of reconfiguration that was followed in the United States: *I believe there ought to be a very convincing reason for reconfiguration. We discovered reconfiguration was the best way to continue the mission of the Congregation in the United States in the future. Our reason was the mission. Thus the mission ought to determine the configuration that is most needed in the twenty-first century*⁴.

Everyone who has engaged in this process points to a similar path. We mention here, for example, the Daughters of the Charity in Spain. The title of their reorganization plan is most attractive and significant: charismatic impulse and new organization. In other words, a process of reconfiguration cannot be initiated from a simple technical point of view or with a view toward survival because in the long term this would lack the solid foundation that is necessary to sustain such a process and thus any difficulty might be strong enough for the whole process to become lost. From the beginning there is a need for a desire to

⁴ P.F. HENRY, *Reconfiguration in the Provinces of the United States*, in "Vincentiana" 54 (July-September 2010), p. 358.

revitalize our charismatic identity within the Church. Unless we are convinced about the need to renew our vocation and ministries then it is best to refrain from speaking about reconfiguration. Indeed, reconfiguration supposes a certain charismatic restlessness which would always benefit from such a process.

Intra-provincial and inter-provincial reconfiguration

The first guideline in this section makes a distinction that seems just: reconfiguration in its intra-provincial and inter-provincial senses. With regard to the internal reconfiguration of the provinces, it must be admitted that all the provinces are in the process of reconfiguration when they open or close community houses as well as when they undertake or withdraw from certain ministries. The visitor and his council have the responsibility of engaging in an on-going process of reconfiguration in the province, questioning themselves about the most appropriate provincial structures in order to attain their objectives in the church and in the here and now, in other words, being ever mindful of the concrete reality of the province. Obviously, if the missionaries of a province do not collaborate with the visitor and his council then the visitor cannot engage in a proactive or a providential process of reconfiguration; instead said process would be limited to one of reorganization that is imposed by circumstances.

Inter-provincial reconfiguration is not only a reality in our time. The name, perhaps, but the reality of inter-provincial reconfiguration is as old as our provinces. In his presentation on reconfiguration in the Congregation, Father José María Nieto, CM said: *Our General Catalogue can help us recognize the different way in which reconfiguration has occurred in the Congregation of the Mission. There in the catalogue on the pages where each Province is listed, there appear one or several dates after the name of the Province. For example, we see the Province of Rome listed with the dates 1642, 1703 and 1825. These dates highlight important moments in the history of this Province and highlight true intra-provincial and supra-provincial reconfiguration*⁵.

Father Nieto went on to say that at the present time there are two types of interprovincial reconfiguration in our Congregation, reconfiguration through expansion and reconfiguration through retrenchment. Our history has been rich in reconfiguration through expansion. We have seen this occur during times when the provinces had many candidates in formation and were looking for new areas in which to

⁵ J.M. NIETO, *Reconfiguration in the Congregation of the Mission*, in "Vincentiana" 54 (July-September 2010), p. 345.

minister. Today, thanks to God, some African and Asian provinces are in this situation. Nevertheless, many other provinces are called to reconfiguration through retrenchment which can have varying results: the union of various provinces, the disappearance of some provinces, a region dependent on another province or the superior general, etc.

The document of the General Assembly invites all the provinces to consider in a serious manner the theme of reconfiguration. In order for this to produce the desired results, all the vital elements of the province must become involved in this process: *our local communities, provincial government teams, provincial assemblies and Conferences of Visitors* (2.1).

To cultivate a sense of belonging to the Congregation (2.2)

Inter-provincial reconfiguration supposes a change of attitude; a change that highlights the importance of belonging to a province and the sense of belonging to the Congregation as a whole, that is, as a body that has received a specific mission from the Church. It is significant that when candidates enter the Internal Seminary they propose to form part of the Congregation (cf., Constitutions, #83.1) and the vow formula highlights the fact that it is within the Congregation of the Mission where the members live out their evangelizing vocation (Constitutions, #58). Above all else, we are missionaries who belong to the Congregation of the Mission. Let us listen to Saint Vincent in order to come to a better understanding of the universal meaning of our vocation-mission: *our vocation is to go, not just to one parish, nor just one diocese, but all over the world*⁶. The “body” of the Congregation is important and it is equally important to feel that one is part of this body that has received a mission in the Church. The provinces are governmental structures that can easily change and that ought to change in order to obtain a greater effectiveness: if at a specific time they have to expand, then they can do this with no problem. If, at another time, they have to retrench, they should look for the best way to do this. To highlight in some exclusive and/or excessive way the provincial identity greatly impoverishes our missionary vocation, creates difficulties for inter-provincial collaboration, and makes it impossible to think about reconfiguration. I believe that everything that we have just said is put forth in this second line of action which invites us *to cultivate a sense of belonging to the Congregation that goes beyond the sense of belonging to a local and provincial community* (2.2).

⁶ CCD: XII, 215.

As we have already said, reconfiguration supposes a change of attitude, we cannot think that achievements will come about without a process. As pointed out in the document, *inter-provincial collaboration* (2.3) in the area of formation or in common projects between two or three provinces can prepare the way for an integrated future. The *Synthesis* also refers to collaboration and presents us with many different areas for collaboration: in formation programs, in common concerns shared by distinct Conferences of Visitors, in the exchange of personnel and in a more balanced distribution of financial resources among the provinces (#8 and #9). These last two points are highlighted in the *Lines of Action* with the clear intention and hope that the Congregation will consider these matters in a serious manner: *to share human and financial resources* (2.4). It is clear that as we view the Congregation as a body or as a family the differences in resources ought to diminish as much as possible. The key word here can be none other than *share*. The manner in which this sharing is to be carried out can be a theme for reflection on the part of the provinces.

3. Dialogue with the poor and with the Vincentian Family

Since the fifth line of action also deals with the poor I will focus here on dialogue with the Vincentian Family. What contribution does this line of action make to *creative fidelity to the mission*? I believe the message here is one that helps us to see and/or realize that we cannot work in just any way but rather we must engage in dialogue and form networks and this is especially applicable when referring to the beneficiaries of our ministry (the poor) or when referring to our collaborators (the Vincentian Family). At the same time, contact with the Vincentian Family is very beneficial for the missionaries because their vocation is enriched as a result of these relationships. John Paul II stated that a new chapter is being written as we reflect on the relationships between the laity and consecrated women and men; both groups are mutually enriched because when people with distinct vocations share the same charism, everyone is enriched⁷.

The Assembly proposed that the whole Congregation walk in this threefold direction with regard to the Vincentian Family: 1. *to foster theological reflection on the challenges and the good that can arise from sharing the charism with the laity* (3.3); 2. *to intensify the collaboration in the area of formation* (3.4); 3. *to work together in common projects* (3.3). First of all we must know the members of the family in order to appreciate them and in order to work with them on behalf of the poor.

⁷ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Vita Consecrata*, 54.

The Congregation has a great potential that is also a great responsibility. Today the Vincentian Family is one of the strongest and most active groups in the Church, one that functions with a specific and precise charism. But the Congregation and the confreres have to be willing to place ourselves in the midst of this family. There is an ecclesiology of communion that has been highlighted by Vatican II and developed throughout the post-Conciliar era. Perhaps its best formulation is found in *Apostolicam actuositatem: in the Church there is a diversity of ministry but unity of mission* (#2). In 1 Corinthians 12:5-24 we find biblical support for this ecclesiology.

Reflection on the ecclesiology of communion and its application to the Vincentian Family should not focus exclusively on common works or projects. Our mission supposes a shared life and apostolic collaboration that if not based on a shared life has no future. It is important to highlight this reality since for so long the consecrated life was based on the premise of separation, distancing itself from other believers. To share life supposes that we share faith in the same God and share the path of Saint Vincent. This is one of the experiences that the laity will live out with great joy as they participate more fully in the Vincentian mission. Certainly the Congregation as an institution must continue to live out this charism while highlighting this dimension that calls them to share their charism with the rest of the family. When we speak about sharing we mean both giving and receiving. In this vital relationship there is no fear of losing our identity. On the contrary, collaboration and relationships with Vincentian laity, when it is authentic, helps the missionaries to come to a better understanding of their identity as they live out the Vincentian charism. In the Apostolic exhortation, *Christifideles Laici* we are assured as we read these words: *Priests and religious ought to assist the lay faithful in their formation... in turn, the lay faithful themselves can and should help priests and religious in the course of their spiritual and pastoral journey* (#61).

In this same line of action that we are now reflecting upon, the Assembly invites us to commit ourselves *to engage in the evangelization of the poor together with the members of the Vincentian Family and other ecclesial groups* (3.5). Thus, sharing life ought to be made more specific through common action. The mission that the Church has entrusted to the Vincentian Family is both tremendous and urgent. Countless men and women are wounded and bleeding on the sides of thousands of roads of unbelief and injustice. Today everyone demands that Vincentians unite together in their undertakings and increase the number of their collaborative initiatives; people want to see us work together as a team and coordinate our contributions, plan together and communicate with one another about our plans. In unity there is strength. And in all of this we cannot discount the possibility that the laity will assume positions of responsibility when they have adequate

and technical formation. To dedicate some of our effort to minister with the Vincentian Family is to work with a vision of the future. Collaboration with the laity can never become a situation in which the laity are simply collaborators with the Congregation. Collaboration demands that we are willing to share responsibility. If the laity are not prepared for this then we must move them in this direction. Therefore from the perspective of an ecclesiology of communion we cannot view the laity as simply agents who enable us to deal with our decreasing numbers. To think and act in this manner would mean that we are treating them as infants, and thus, we would also be acting in a disrespectful manner with regard to their lay Vincentian vocation which is as important as our own.

4. Creativity in the ministries

This fourth line of action touches the very heart of *creative fidelity to the mission*: if the provinces do not renew and examine their ministries, if they do not make decisions about the inculturated expressions of the charism which animates the Congregation, then it will be difficult to achieve the renewal that the Assembly encourages us to take on as our own. Harmony between our words and actions can make people who are in the process of searching question themselves. Incoherency between our words and actions attracts no one and is unsatisfactory even to those who are members of the Congregation. Having said this it must be affirmed that there are admirable examples of creative ministry within the Congregation. Number five of the *Synthesis* points out a few of them. True not all of our ministries reveal this creativity. How, then, can we highlight these creative ministries so that they become concrete signs for the Congregation as it attempts to walk along a more authentic path? We are not referring here to marketing techniques that manipulate reality in an unscrupulous manner in order to obtain some specific objective. Rather here we are speaking about making known a Vincentian face that is very real within the Congregation, one that obviously coexists with other faces less clearly defined.

This fourth line of action invites us to examine and renew our ministries once again so that some of them reflect our charism in a clearer manner. We are also invited to become involved in new ministries with the creativity that we have learned from Saint Vincent. To create new ministries is to serve the Church and the world with a renewed spirit. In others words we are able to open the windows and thus allow the fresh air of providence to enter. Here we find an explanation of what has been stated so far: *to support at the provincial level challenging works* (4.4); *to undertake new forms of service to the*

clergy (4.3); to undertake new works of evangelization in the area of new emerging cultures, ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue (4.6); and to have as a value drawing near to the most withdrawn (mission *inter gentes*) (4.7). All of these examples are very Vincentian and they arise from a group of confreres who in July 2010 dedicated themselves to a search for that which is best for the Congregation. We know that this is not easy for many provinces for reasons that we are all aware of but it is within the grasp of each province and individual to point out that which can be obtained, mindful of course, of the present reality. The simple fact of formulating the question and searching for an answer is a worthwhile task. Maintaining a tension with regard to the direction of our true ministries does a tremendous good for all the members of the province even if this is unable to be concretized in some way.

In the revision of our ministries and, as we are reminded in 4.1, in the revision of community structures there is a basic criteria which ought to guide us. Here we refer to the missionary and prophetic dimensions as pointed out in another part of the document when envisioning the Congregation's future. Our life and our style of ministry has to say something and question the people who are close to us, just as Jesus did with his contemporaries and as Vincent did in the seventeenth Century. This is also creativity. On the contrary we can easily become mere functionaries of the sacred, persons who offer important services in the area of the spiritual life and who know how to communicate the message of the gospel when they speak but who say very little with their lives and as a result communicate no special message. We know that in the biblical world the language of gestures and symbols takes on a great importance and today in our world, characterized by indifference and weariness from so many discourses perhaps it is this language, the language of gestures and symbols that can best speak to people.

5. The methodology of systemic change

In this fifth section of *The Lines of Action* the poor appear in the first person. This is not the only place where the poor are referred to. They are spoken about in the first part of the third line of action where it is pointed out that we should listen to them and advocate on their behalf. Our mission with the poor means that we should assist them without making countless distinctions. Let us listen to the very clear words of Vincent: *If there are any among us who think they are in the Mission to evangelize poor people but not to alleviate their sufferings, to take care of their spiritual needs but not their temporal ones, I reply that we have to help them and have them assisted in every way, by us and by*

*others*⁸. This was a firm conviction of our Founder. On another occasion Vincent stated: *We can say that coming to evangelize the poor does not simply mean to teach them the mysteries necessary for their salvation, but also to do what was foretold and prefigured by the prophets to make the gospel effective*⁹. Today our Constitutions have echoed Saint Vincent's conviction as we are invited to evangelize in word and deed (cf. Constitutions, #11). We cannot renounce the poor because they constitute part of our charismatic identity and we cannot forget about them because this would essentially mean that we have renounced them. In the third line of action the Assembly invites the whole Company to be attentive to the poor, to listen to them and to help them become subjects of their own history. The Assembly was not considering any specific new works even though it was not opposed to such undertakings, but rather the delegates were thinking about our present ministries. In all of these endeavors the poor should be given a position of primary concern and sensitivity. And why not, since in every place where the Congregation exists, ministry with people who are poor can easily be found. In the case that this were not true the means of communication will enable us to hear their voice, just as we were able to hear their voice in the videos that were presented during the assembly. It would be unthinkable to renew the Congregation's commitment to the poor and impossible to be creatively faithful to the mission if the poor were not present in the provinces and in its various ministries.

Here then we are presented with that which is most fundamental. The fifth line of action invites us to work on behalf of the poor but, according to the Assembly, we should do this in a way that utilizes the methodology of systemic change. This means that we also seek to discover the causes of poverty which will enable us to engage in activity that will assist people to break the circle that prevents them from leaving their situation of poverty and thus prevents them from becoming agents of their own freedom. The methodology of systemic changes supposes that one is willing to work as a member of a team, willing to collaborate with others and form networks. All of this is done in order to obtain the greatest effectiveness. Today the dignity of the poor requires our assistance so that they can become responsible for their life and their destiny. If Saint Vincent were alive today it is certain that he would have embraced this way of ministering on behalf of the poor.

⁸ CCD: XII, 77.

⁹ CCD: XII, 75.

CONCLUSION

The five lines of action point out a path to follow. They are like a plan that the Congregation has placed before itself for the next six years. It is true that the documents were produced by the General Assembly after having listened to the Spirit and after having entered into a process of discernment, but it is also true that the content of these lines of action goes beyond said Assembly. In fact these documents include the fruits of two long years of preparation with the participation of all the confreres of the Congregation, first in the domestic assemblies and then in the provincial assemblies. All of this work is included in these documents that now ought to enlighten and enliven the whole Congregation.

In these documents fundamental aspects of our life are pointed out. It is true that certain lines of action may not appear to be very original in the sense that they have been written about in other documents or have been the focus of dialogue and concern for some extended period of time. Among these we point out, formation, dialogue with the poor, the Vincentian Family, as well as creativity in ministry. Others in this category could be reconfiguration and systemic change. But in either case, the Assembly, that is, the delegates to the Assembly and with them the whole Congregation, has felt it necessary to grow *in creative fidelity to the mission*. Therefore it is necessary to interpret the lines of action from the perspective of creative fidelity to the mission since it is only in this way that we can come to a full understanding of their meaning.

Clearly not everything was concluded with the publication of these lines of action. Now the provinces, the local communities and the confreres must do their part because the document needs to be assimilated, digested, integrated and adapted to the distinct realities and cultures where the Congregation is present. Without this second further work the document would be condemned to the dead letter box.

Translation: CHARLES T. PLOCK, C.M.

Celebration of the 350th Anniversary of the Death of Saint Vincent de Paul and Saint Louise de Marillac

Vincentiana Editorial Board

1. PROCLAMATION OF THE JUBILEE YEAR

On May 13th, 2009 the Superior General, Father G. Gregory Gay, wrote a circular letter to all the members of the Vincentian Family (VINCENTIANA, 53rd Year, N. 3, May-June 2009) announcing the Jubilee Year (September 27th, 2009 and continuing until September 27th, 2010) to commemorate the 350th anniversary of the death of our Founders, Saint Vincent de Paul and Saint Louise de Marillac. It was proposed that “Charity and Mission” be the theme for this year. Then Father General pointed out certain objectives and formed several commissions whose members began to work: the Heritage Commission, the Projects Commission, the Celebration Commission, the Secretariat Committee, the Finance Committee.

2. CELEBRATION OF THE JUBILEE YEAR

a) The work of the Commissions:

The Heritage Commission

The Heritage Commission, after rejecting the first idea of an International Symposium which would necessarily be limited to a reduced number of participants, opted to stir up the interest of all the members of the Vincentian Family in a reflection on the spiritual heritage that they have received from their Founders and in turn to look at the repercussions that their mission could have on the present day situation in which the Vincentian Family, in creative fidelity to the charism that they have received, desires to renew itself in the spirit of the Founders. In order to facilitate this process the Commission created twelve

reflection/dialogue papers that were published in English, Spanish, French, Italian, Portuguese and Polish and were made available to everyone on the website that was created specifically for the celebration of the 350th anniversary: <http://famvin.org/anniversary>

The Projects Commission

This Commission was asked to formulate a specific initiative that would involve all the branches of the Vincentian Family in a project on behalf of the poorest of the poor. This Commission was also asked to insure that said initiative would fit into a framework of systemic change. At the beginning of 2009 the Commission presented several possibilities to the leaders of the Vincentian Family who decided to accept a micro-financing project in Haiti.

In April, 2009 the Projects Commission had specified the ways in which they would carry out their task. As they reflected on ways to expand collaboration with this project they created a web page that appeared on March 4, 2010 and led to the first contributions from the Vincentian Family. This site is located at: <http://famvin.org/anniversary/en/haiti/project-in-haiti>

On April 4th, famvin.org presented a video in English, Spanish and French in which Father Robert Maloney, CM explained the ways in which the Vincentian Family and each one of its groups and members could collaborate in the reconstruction of Haiti by creating and/or contributing to the creation of loans for small businesses and/or consuming their products, thus helping the people of Haiti to move forward in the reconstruction of their economy. Also people were able to create scholarships for the children of Haiti. The video in English can be viewed at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LWC7IE8nirU>

Zafen is an experienced and first-rate community of lenders/contributors who believe in the power of businesses to promote sustainable economic development in Haiti. Zafen allows people to support sustainable economic development projects in Haiti by financing businesses of various proportions, thus providing employment opportunities for people who live in some of the poorest conditions in the world. These contributions allow the people of Haiti to create work, to encourage sound business practices and to point the way to self-sufficiency to women and men who are engaged in the establishment of new businesses.

The micro-finance project of Zafen for Haiti was created by four organizations: the International Vincentian Family, De Paul University (Chicago, the largest Catholic University in the United States), Fonkoze (an alternative bank in Haiti that offers services to people who are poor and that currently has 200,000 clients), and the Haitian Hometown

Associations Resource Group (a group that allows Haitians living outside the country to contribute to the social and economic growth of their country of origin). In the most recent statement that was published on the internet, it was reported that in the first nine months of operation more than \$276,000 has been obtain for 460 projects in 97 businesses and organizations throughout Haiti. At the Zafen web site one will find a description of the programs, the evolution of the projects and ways to collaborate with this program: <http://zafen.org>

The Celebration Commission

From the time of their first meeting the members of this commission decided to limit themselves to preparing two events which would involve the whole Vincentian Family. It was left to the national, regional and/or provincial coordinators to organize their own celebrations. The first event that this Commission organized was held in Paris on the feast of Saint Louise and the second event was held in Rome on the feast of Saint Vincent de Paul and marked the closing of the Jubilee Year.

In order to allow for the greatest number of participants to journey to Paris and Rome it was decided to hold the one celebration in the cathedral of Paris on March 14, 2010 and the other celebration in St. Peter's Basilica, Rome on Saturday, September 25, 2010.

The Commission was charged with obtaining a plenary indulgence from the Holy See for all those faithful who physically or spiritually participated in the celebration in Paris or Rome.

The Secretariat Commission

This Commission was asked to create a web page that could be integrated into the web site for the Vincentian Family (<http://famvin.org>). The purpose of this site was to provide a space where general and regional information could be communicated and where formation materials could be posted that would enrich our reflection as well as the celebrations that took place in the different places where the Vincentian Family is involved in ministry. The website was created in French, English, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese and Polish and can be found at: <http://famvin.org/anniversary>

An issue of *Vincentiana* (52nd Year, N. 5, September-October 2009) was dedicated to the study of the relationship between Vincent and Louise who were animated by the same love and collaborated with one another in order to make the love of God more visible among the poor. *Vincentiana* also published a supplement to its second edition in 2010...

an edition that contained a life of Saint Vincent (based on his writing and sayings) that was written by Father Bernard Koch, CM. *Vincentiana* will also publish a bibliography that was compiled during 2010 and this will complement the bibliography that was produced in 2009 and published in *Vincentiana* (54th Year, N. 1, January-March 2010).

This Commission was also requested to prepare a pamphlet on the Vincentian charism that could be distributed worldwide. The Commission wanted to commit the whole Vincentian Family to this project and wrote a letter to the leaders of the different branches inviting them to send photographs that illustrated various ways in which the charism and the ministry of Saint Vincent and Saint Louise was being lived at the present time... photographs that the leaders felt should be included in the pamphlet. The idea was to highlight the collaboration of countless men and women from every continent who are united by the same charism and able to express this charism in a variety of concrete and specific ways (an expression of creative fidelity to the Holy Founders).

The fruit of this work and collaboration has been the publication of a manuscript that is almost sixty pages in length and very original in its presentation. The pamphlet, which is entitled *Mission and Charity*, has two faces, that is, one can begin to read from one angle and then continue the reading from another angle, turning the book around. The decision to produce the book in this form is explained in the preface: *This book can be opened beginning with Saint Vincent or Saint Louise but regardless of where one begins one always discovers the same mission of charity. Mission and charity with its countless facets and different activities give a distinctive mark to the diversity in unity of the Vincentian Family. If one begins with Saint Vincent or Saint Louise one will always arrive at the same reality that is presently being lived by us, their children: God fills our hearts with his love and enables us to grow in such a way that we are able to express our solidarity through action on behalf of the poor.* The photographs that are ordered by geographical area are a unique presentation of the Vincentian reality. It was intentional to not point out if the text that accompanies the photograph is taken from the writing of Saint Vincent or Saint Louise because the words that are written in this manuscript are an expression of the pure and passionate love that would have allowed either of the two Founders to sign their names beneath the text. This pamphlet has been published in ten languages and should be seen as a family album in which every member of the Vincentian Family can find themselves and recognize themselves reflected in this work.

b) The Jubilee Year in France

As expected, the Vincentian Family in France took much interest in the Jubilee Year. Many Vincentians understood that remembering the life and the work of our Founders was a golden opportunity to renew their vocation and to make these two “giants of charity” known to the People of God. This was certainly the idea that guided the various commissions as they moved forward in their work.

Activities were programmed on a regular basis throughout the Jubilee Year. For example, on the second Sunday of each month a different aspect of the life of our Founders was presented in the Miraculous Medal Chapel (their Christology, their spirituality, the discovery of their vocation, the charitable foundations, etc.). Thousands of pilgrims from France and other parts of the world brought to their homes the message of Saint Vincent and Saint Louise.

Young women and men also participated in the Jubilee Year. From November 2009 to August 2010 six sessions were held in which young people were able to reflect on the life and the spirituality of these holy Founders and then able to reflect on their own vocation and were offered the opportunity to participate in a spiritual retreat.

We want to mention some other activities and so we highlight the following:

- October 2009: a weekend of reflection was offered to the Daughters of Charity and the Missionaries of the Congregation. During this time the participants were able to reflect on their Vincentian vocation and on the different ways to renew themselves in their vocation. This gathering was open to all the French speaking countries.
- On March 14th, 2010 the Eucharist was celebrated in the Cathedral of Notre-Dame, Paris and presided by Cardinal André Vingt-Trois. This celebration, which was organized by the Celebration Commission, was televised by KTO, the broadcasting company of the French Episcopal Conference. In his homily the cardinal spoke about the charitable dimension of Saint Louise and at the same time highlighted the fact that her spirit and message is most valid for people of the twenty-first century. The cardinal spoke with conviction and clarity and did not hide his great esteem for the sons and daughters of Saint Louise and Saint Vincent. The Vincentian Family filled the cathedral and almost a hundred Vincentian Missionaries (the majority of them, French) concelebrated this solemn Eucharist which was definitely one of the highlights of this Vincentian Jubilee Year.
- On April 25th, 2010 the Vincentian Family made a pilgrimage to Folleville. About 2,000 people journeyed to this place where Saint

Vincent discovered his vocation of evangelizing people who were poor. This was a most joyful day and the participants were able to celebrate the Eucharist together in this holy place.

- May 14-15, 2010 a colloquy was held at the Berçeau. A significant group from all the branches of the Vincentian Family reflected on Saint Vincent de Paul and Saint Louise de Marillac and the meaning of their life and work for the twenty-first century. There was much interest in the various presentations that were made which also created a profound and animated dialogue. The presentations were: Father Phillippe Molac, a priest from the Company of San Sulpice, *The Theological Formation of Vincent de Paul, the foundation for his charitable mission*; Father Jean-Pierre Renouard, a specialist in Vincentian spirituality, *The Congregation of the Mission*; Ms. Laurence de la Brosse, president of the AIC, *The commitments of the AIC and the Saint Vincent de Paul Society in present day France*; Patrick Lefeuvre, *Society at the time of Saint Vincent de Paul*; Sister Evelyne Franc, DC, Superior General of the Company of the Daughters of Charity, presented the Company of the Daughters from the perspective of their identity and their present vision. Michel Camdessus developed the theme, *The contemporary world's search for meaning*. At the same time Father Yves Bouchet, CM animated these sessions with his voice and his guitar. In fact, this singer-author offered an interesting recital about Saint Vincent, Saint Louise and the Vincentian charism in today's church and society.

Obviously we are unable to present here all the different activities that occurred in France. There were many celebrations, many oral and written reflections, opportunities to gather together for prayer which cannot be detailed here because of a lack of space. But we are confident that all of these different activities contributed to the renewal and the deepening of our Vincentian vocation. Only the Lord knows the impact of all of this.

c) The Closing of the Jubilee Year in Rome

The closing in Rome was open to the whole Vincentian Family and in fact, Vincentians from throughout the world participated in this event which was also marked by the celebration of the Vincentian Family in Italy.

The campaign: “*Water, a drop for life*”

During the year 2010 the Vincentian Family in Italy was involved in promoting a campaign under the very suggestive title: *water, a drop for life*. The objective of this campaign was to raise funds for the construction of wells in arid places. This campaign also provided the means to remain attentive to the urgent needs of those people who are poor and enter into solidarity with these people by assisting them.

Exposition of documents in Naples

On the occasion of the 350th anniversary of the death of the Saint Vincent de Paul and Saint Louise de Marillac, the Archivist Association in Campania, in collaboration with the Provincial Superiors of the Congregation of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity organized an exposition of documents that detailed the history of the Vincentian Family in Naples and in Southern Italy. The documents showed the primary activities that were developed by the Vincentians in the course of history: educational works and charitable works for the poor and those living on the margins of society.

The exposition was divided into two parts. The first part referred to the important patrimony that is located in the Provincial House of the Congregation of the Mission in Naples and which is funded by various sources. The documents that were exhibited covered the period from 1668-1937 and explain the activities that were developed by the Missionaries from the time of their arrival in Naples. The second part was dedicated to the material from the provincial archives of the Daughters of Charity in Naples. The Daughters came to this region in 1834 at the request of the Vincentian Missionaries. The documents that were exhibited covered the period of 1845-1913 and give witness to the commitment of the Daughters of Charity as they engaged in countless charitable and social activities.

The initial work and the organization and the mounting of the exposition was entrusted to Antonella Gugliucci and Giuseppina Raschella, representatives of the Archivist Association in Campania.

Meeting of the Vincentian Family in Rome

The coordinator of the Vincentian Family had prepared an intense three day program that was developed and carried out to the satisfaction of everyone. This meeting, in fact, served as a platform for the solemn closing of the Jubilee Year on the occasion

of these special anniversaries which were celebrated throughout the world with various initiatives and concrete projects on behalf of people who are poor.

The meeting began on Friday, September 24th at 9:00am with the celebration of the Eucharist that was presided by Cardinal José Saraiva Martins, Prefect-emeritus of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. This Mass was celebrated in the Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, a very short distance from the Saint Peter's Square. Many priests (the majority of whom were priest of the Congregation of the Mission) concelebrated the Eucharist.

Professor Simona Negrizzo opened a series of interventions on the theme **Charity and Mission** with her presentation that was entitled, *France during the Great Century*. She was followed by Father Luigi Mezzadri, CM (*A New Way of Being Priest: Saint Vincent and the Priesthood*), Father Nicola Albanesi, CM (*Christ, the Rule of the Mission*). After a brief recess a video on Vincentian charity was viewed by the participants which was then followed by a presentation of Professor Yvonne zu Dohna (*The Poor in Art*), Professor Giuseppe De Rita (*A New Culture of Charity: The Poor, my Burden and Sorrow*), Father Erminio Antonello, CM (*The Church: The Body of Christ, the Home of the Poor*), and Father Landousies, CM (*A New Way of Speaking About God to People: Saint Vincent and Evangelization*).

On Saturday, September 26, the following made presentations: Bruna Zarri (*Women in the XVII Century*), Marina Costa (*Saint Vincent, Saint Louise, Vincentian Volunteers and the new Challenges of Poverty*), Sister Evelyne Franc, DC (*Saint Louise: Spiritual Guide*), and Father Luigi Nuovo, CM (*Saint Louise, Saint and Organizer of Charitable Works*). At five in the afternoon the participants in this meeting joined with those who had gathered together for the solemn concelebration of the Eucharist in Saint Peter's Basilica, an event that was organized by the International Commission for Celebrations during the Jubilee Year.

At 9:00am on Sunday, September 26th, Father Gregory Gay, CM, Superior General, celebrated Mass at the Augustinianum. After Mass Father Corpus Delgado, CM spoke about *Saint Louise and Devotion to the Holy Spirit*. At noon the participants prayed the angelus with the Pope in Saint Peter's Square. The words that the Holy Father spoke on this occasion can be found on page 35 of this edition of *Vincentiana*.

Solemn Concelebration at the Vatican

The official closing celebration of the Jubilee Year was prepared by the Celebration Commission and began at 5:00pm on Saturday, September 25th with a procession to the altar. The Eucharist was presided by Franc Cardinal Rodé, CM, Prefect of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life. More than one hundred fifty priests (the majority of whom were members of the Congregation of the Mission) from Italy and others part of the world concelebrated the Eucharist. Thirty-five Spanish Vincentian Missionaries traveled to Rome for this celebration.

The Mass was celebrated on the altar of the chair and the faithful from all parts of the world filled the nave of the Basilica. A group of people, who were ill and in wheelchairs, were positioned in special places that had been reserved for them.

The *Observatore Romano* of September 26 echoed this celebration with the following words: *Charity and Mission are two sides of the same coin because to love the Lord means that one also loves with the same intensity one's sisters and brothers, especially those sisters and brothers who are poor. This was highlighted this afternoon in the Vatican Basilica by the cardinal-prefect of the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, Franc Rodé, in his homily on the occasion of the 350th anniversary of the death of Saint Vincent de Paul and his primary collaborator, Saint Louise de Marillac. Calling to mind the example of these holy Founders, the Vincentian cardinal recalled that: to be Vincentian today means that we continue to follow Christ, the evangelizer of the poor and thus continue Jesus' mission; it means that we are missionaries who inflame the hearts of people with a lifestyle of simplicity, humility, meekness, mortification and zeal. In this sense a Vincentian ought to have something more than mere knowledge of the poor: true Vincentians know Christ and place Christ at the center of their lives; they know Saint Vincent and Saint Louise and the other Vincentian saints; they know the poor. Vincentians allow themselves to be evangelized and changed by the poor and they work and labor on behalf of the poor. Above all else, Vincentians are totally for God and for the service of the people.*

Homily of Cardinal Rodé

Franc Cardinal Rodé, C.M.

*Prefect of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life
and Societies of Apostolic Life*

***The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the poor*** (Luke 4:18).

Evangelizare pauperibus missit me.

These words of the Lord place us at the very heart of our celebration today. These words resounded time and time again from the soul and the lips of Vincent de Paul. These same words resound and indeed ought to resound from the lips and the heart of every Vincentian who follows Vincent's path. We have gathered here this afternoon to celebrate an act of thanksgiving on the 350th anniversary of the death of Saint Louise de Marillac and Saint Vincent de Paul. The beginning of this Jubilee Year was celebrated in the place where these saints lived and today we are participating in the closing of this Jubilee in the Papal Basilica which preserves the most ancient memories of the Church and, beginning with that of Saint Peter, guards the bodies of so many martyrs in the *very heart of the Catholic Church: a vibrant heart, thanks to the Holy Spirit who always keeps it alive.*¹ As sons and daughters of Vincent and Louise we place ourselves on the uninterrupted line of pilgrims who throughout the centuries have come here to pray before the tomb of Peter, who have come here to prolong his profession of faith: *You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God* (Matthew 16:16). This is Peter's profession of faith, the unbreakable faith of the Church, the faith that animated Vincent and Louise. This is also our faith.

We are here this afternoon to repeat our hymn of thanksgiving, to sing with the psalmist: *Lauda anima mea Dominum* (*Let my soul praise the Lord*). **Thank you** for having given us Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac, two geniuses of charity and two athletes of holiness... thank you for having given them to the world and to each one of us. **Thank you** for the countless sons and daughters who have followed the example of our Founders and have embraced the invitation *ad evangelizare pauperibus* (*to evangelize the poor*). The thanksgiving that is raised up to the Lord profoundly moves us as we see the fruitfulness of the Vincentian charism in the Church. This afternoon countless sons and daughters of Vincent and Louise have gathered together here with

¹ Benedict XVI, Address on the occasion of his Visit to Saint Peter's Factory, March 14, 2007.

the Congregation of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity in order to give thanks to the Lord. We are part of a family that is composed of more than 300 groups, institutes and movements that participate in the same charism and have chosen to consecrate themselves to the apostolate to the poor whom they recognize as *their lords and masters*². All of you in positions of leadership of the different branches of the Vincentian Family and all who are members of this spiritual family and are united in love: love of God and love of the poor, allow me to extend to all of you, a warm and fraternal embrace. I especially want to greet and thank the superior of the Congregation of the Mission, Father Gregory Gay and the superioress of the Daughters of Charity, Sister Evelynne Franc, and together with them the leaders of the International Association of Charity and the Saint Vincent de Paul Society.

This Jubilee Year has emphasized two key words: *charity* and *mission*. The Holy Father in his letter to the Superiors General highlighted this reality: *placing this Jubilee under the sign of charity and mission you have desired to rightly reveal something at the very heart of the heritage you have received*³. Charity and mission have been the hinges of the life and action of Vincent and Louise, cornerstones that they wanted to leave to us and which were expressed in their first works: *The Confraternities of Charity*, *The Daughters of Charity*, and *The Priests of the Mission*.

A famous and illustrious group of personalities became outstanding in France during the 1600's. In literature (it is enough to recall here Corneille, Racine and Molière), in philosophy the *côgito* of René Descartes and the *Pensées* of Pascal: *What a difference there is between knowing God and loving God*⁴. This was the century of Richelieu and Mazarin and the countless intrigues for power. This was also the century of Saint Francis de Sales, Cardinal Pierre de Bérulle, Jean-Jacques Olier and the grater orator, Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet.

But the XVII century was also a time of spiritual and material misery. Vincent de Paul wrote to Pope Innocent X and as he described the situation he asked for the Pope's intervention: *Confident of your paternal affection, with which you graciously hear and receive all your children, even the least, dare I also make known to you the very pitiful state of our France, which is most deserving of compassion. The royal house is divided by dissensions, the people are split into various factions; cities and provinces are ruined by civil wars; farms, cantons, and towns*

² CCD IX, 97; SVP IX, 119; SVP.ES IX, 125.

³ BENEDICT XVI, *Letter to the Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission and the Superioress General of the Company of the Daughters of Charity*, June 14, 2010.

⁴ BLAISE PSACAL, *Pensieri*, 280.

are destroyed, ruined, and burned. The farmers cannot harvest what they have sown and no longer plant anything for the coming years. Soldiers do as they please; the people are exposed not only to their thefts and pillaging, but also to murder and all kinds of torture. Most of the country people are perishing of starvation if not by the sword. Not even priests escape the soldiers' hands; they are treated with inhuman cruelty, tortured and killed. Young women are raped, and even nuns are victims of their lust and fury. Churches are profaned, plundered, and destroyed; those left standing are, for the most part, abandoned by their pastors, so the people are deprived of the sacraments....⁵

In light of this situation Saint Vincent prepared himself to evangelize the poor. He said to his missionaries: *So, our vocation is to go, not just to one parish, not just to one diocese, but all over the world; and to do what? To set people's hearts on fire, to do what the Son of God did. He came to set the world on fire in order to inflame it with His love.*⁶ *What do we have to desire but that it may burn and consume everything. My dear confreres, let us reflect on that, please. It is true then, that I am sent not only to love God but to make Him loved. It is not enough for me to love God, if my neighbor does not love Him.*⁷

Our mission is to inflame the hearts of people. *Charity and mission are two sides of the same coin: love God and make God loved by other people; to love the Lord and to love one's brothers and sisters; affective and effective love: Let us love God, my brothers, but let it be with the strength of our arms and the sweat of our brows.*⁸ *To be a Christian and to see our brother suffering without weeping with him, without being sick with him!*⁹ *That is to be lacking in charity; it is being a caricature of a Christian; it is inhuman; it is to be worse than animals.* Vincent did not hesitate to say that the Church had greater need for apostolic men than for contemplatives: *The Church... has a great need for evangelical men who work to purify, enlighten, and unite her to her Divine Spouse.*¹⁰ Vincent wrote to Claude Dufour, a missionary who wanted to abandon the Company in order to enter the Carthusians: *the apostolic life does not exclude contemplation but encompasses it and profits by it to know better the eternal truths it must proclaim. In addition, it is more helpful to our neighbor, whom we are obliged to love as ourselves and consequently to assist in a way solitaries do not.* Vincent

⁵ ANTONIO SICARI, *Santi nella carità discepoli, amici di Vincenzo de Paoli*, ed. Jaca Book, 1998.

⁶ CCD XII, 215; SVP XII, 262; SVP.ES XI, 553.

⁷ CCD XI, 32; SVP XI, 40; SVP.ES XI, 539.

⁸ CCD XII, 222; SVP XII, 271; SVP.ES XII, 561.

⁹ CCD III, 204; SVP III, 202; SVP.ES III, 181.

¹⁰ CCD III, 344; SVP III, 246-247; SVP.ES III, 320.

invited the missionaries to be Carthusians in their houses and apostles outside them¹¹.

We often run the risk of being Christian in name only, or worse, of being Vincentian in name only because we lack a continual union, a back and forth movement between contemplation and action, because we have forgotten to kneel before the Father and prepare ourselves with the sweat of our brow. In our apostolate we often lack knees, arms and sweat. It is true that there are different ways of speaking about spirituality. Our spirituality is one of incarnation, a spirituality of service and not one that seeks refuge in the world of the spirit in which everything is perfect and pure but rather a spirituality that recovers its original character of life according to the Spirit. We discover that our spirituality is rooted in daily life, with its hardships and tensions, with its delights and disappointments, thus revealing sound spiritual paths — personal and community spiritual paths — paths that are filled with life and mystery.

In order to remain firm in this spirit and in order to persevere, Saint Louise invited the Daughters to a great love: *I desire all of them to be filled with a great love which will immerse them so sweetly in God and so charitably in the service of the poor that their hearts will no longer have place for so many thoughts which endanger their perseverance. Courage then, my dear Sisters! Seek only to please God by faithfully observing His commandments and evangelical counsels because the goodness of God has deigned to call us to this. This should lead us to observe our Rules exactly but also cheerfully and diligently. Serve your masters with great gentleness*¹².

Thus the center of the life of our Founders is Jesus: his incarnation and mission. *Jesus Christ is our father and mother: he is our everything*, are the surprising words of Saint Vincent. Again he stated: *The primary objective to which God has called us is that of loving our Lord Jesus Christ... if we distance ourselves even a little from the thought that the poor are living members of Christ, we diminish within ourselves charity and gentleness*. Vincent did not encourage people to lose themselves in God but rather to consume themselves for God and in God. In fact charity is born from an undistracted attention to the reality that we are united to Christ, living and recognized and loved. According to his biographers, *Jesus* was the last word that Saint Vincent spoke before he died. Also in the Constitutions of the Daughters of Charity we read: *Christ is the rule of the Daughters of Charity. They endeavor to follow*

¹¹ LOUIS ABELLY, *The Life of the Venerable Servant of God, Vincent de Paul*, New Rochelle, N.Y., 1993, Volume I, page 124.

¹² *Spiritual Writings of Louise de Marillac*, New City Press, Brooklyn, New York, 1991, p. 75.

*Him as Scripture reveals Him to them and as their Founders perceived Him: Adorer of the Father, Servant of His Loving Plan, Evangelizer of those who are poor*¹³. Christ is essential. With our hearts in Christ and with Christ's heart we can regenerate the will to love the poor, *our lords and masters*¹⁴. This is the mission that Vincent entrusted to Louise and through Louise was entrusted to all the Daughters: *Go, therefore, Mademoiselle, go in the name of Our Lord. I pray that His Divine Goodness may accompany you, be your consolation along the way, your shade against the heat of the sun, your shelter in rain and cold, your soft bed in your weariness, your strength in your toil and finally, that he may bring you back in perfect health and filled with good works*¹⁵.

This is a demanding path, one that reveals all our weaknesses: our faltering faith, the difficulties that our communities encounter in welcoming all persons, the weariness from our charitable activity that does not allow us to interpret the events of life nor enables us to live a life that is unified. The difficulties that often surround an attempt to understand a world that is changing and the harshness of the confrontation with the world has given rise to feelings of ineffectiveness in our activity and this has led to frustration in many communities of religious men and women. More and more frequently this weariness leads to activism, the result of an anxious and fearful generosity of individuals closed in upon themselves or communities too focused on their own activities, plans and initiatives.

We know that difficult times arise when we fail to ground ourselves in that which is essential, when we do not allow the grounding to become more profound, and it is then that fervent prayer is necessary so that the Holy Spirit might once again descend upon us and fill our daily activity. These are the times when the words of the Lord Jesus should resound in our hearts: *Take courage, I have conquered the world* (John 16:33).

The Constitutions of the Congregation of the Mission ask us to remain in a continual state of renewal, faithful to the gospel, attentive to the signs of the time, opening up new ways and using new means adapted to the circumstances of time and place¹⁶. This continual state of renewal ought to be above all else a work of the Spirit: the Spirit continually makes us new creatures who are able to provide concrete and durable responses to the urgent demands of our time.

¹³ Constitutions and Statutes of the Company of the Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul, C. 8.

¹⁴ CCD XI, 97; SVP IX, 119; SVP.ES IX, 125.

¹⁵ CCD I, 64-65; SVP I, 73-74; SVP.ES I, 135-136.

¹⁶ Constitutions and Statutes of the Congregation of the Mission, #2.

Pope Benedict writes: The Christian's program — the program of the Good Samaritan, the program of Jesus — is "a heart which sees." This heart sees where love is needed and acts accordingly.¹⁷ The Lord gave Vincent and Louise hearts that were big, vast and ample,¹⁸ and in their hearts they were able to embrace all men and all women. Saint Vincent told the Missionaries: If we can do nothing of ourselves, we can do everything with God. Yes, the Mission can do anything because we have in us the seeds of the omnipotence of Jesus Christ. That is why no one can excuse himself on the grounds of his powerlessness; we will always have greater strength than is needed, especially when the occasion arises; for, when it does, a man feels like a completely new man¹⁹.

From the time of Saint Vincent and Saint Louise until today, many things have changed, but the demand for love today is just as real as it was in the seventeenth century, perhaps even more real. The accelerated changes that characterize the world in which we live and the repercussions that this has on our way of thinking about life, the human person and the religious dimension of the person... all of this demands that each one of us and every Christian community become ever more aware of this situation. How can the voices of these two saints find echo in the present world, ever more secularized and focused on itself and in the midst of an unprecedented world crisis, a crisis that is moral, cultural, economic, and spiritual? In a world in which people live as though God did not exist *there is a sort of fear of silence, of recollection, of thinking of one's own actions, of the profound meaning of one's life. All too often people prefer to live only the fleeting moment, deceiving themselves that it will bring lasting happiness; they prefer to live superficially, without thinking, because it seems easier; they are afraid to seek the Truth or perhaps afraid that the Truth will find us, will take hold of us and change our life*²⁰. How can Vincent's and Louise's lived experience of God be useful to us? In what way can we, as Vincentians, continue to be worthy children of our Founders?

To be Vincentian today means that we continue to follow Christ, the evangelizer of the poor and that we place Jesus and his mission in a central position in our life. To be Vincentian today means that we are missionaries who inflame the hearts of people with a lifestyle of simplicity, humility, meekness, mortification and zeal²¹. To be Vincentian today means that we are Carthusians in our homes and

¹⁷ BENEDICT XVI, *Deus caritas est*, #31b.

¹⁸ CCD XI, 192-193; SVP XI, 203; SVP.ES XI, 3, 122.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ BENEDICT XVI, *General Audience*, August 25, 2010.

²¹ Cf. *Constitutions and Statutes of Congregation of the Mission*, #7.

apostles outside the home. To live the Vincentian spirit is to live as the Son who has been given to us as a model: the same total love, a love that day by day becomes a word of trust, a gesture of mercy, an attitude of awareness and gratitude, a commitment that shares the concerns of the search for meaning and freedom that so many desire. This love opens the door to a definitive life beyond the realms of death.

A Vincentian ought to have something more than mere knowledge of the poor: true Vincentians know Christ and place Christ at the center of their lives; they know Saint Vincent and Saint Louise and the other Vincentian saints; they know the poor²². They allow themselves to be evangelized and changed by the poor and they work and labor on behalf of the poor because *charity cannot remain idle*.²³ To be Vincentian means that our hearts are filled with imagination because *Charity is inventive to infinity*²⁴. Vincentians kneel down and use their arms and the sweat of their brow. Above all else, Vincentians are *totally for God and for the service of the people*²⁵.

Saint Vincent frequently said that charity is a *fire* that inflames people²⁶. Through the intercession and the example of Vincent and Louise and all the Vincentian saints, let us allow ourselves to be enflamed with this love. I conclude with the words and the exhortation of Saint Louise, asking God to bless all our undertakings: *Please continue to serve our dear masters with great gentleness, respect, and cordiality, always seeing God in them*²⁷.

Translation: CHARLES T. PLOCK, C.M.

²² Cf. ROBERT P. MALONEY, *Andate in tutto il mondo! Predicate il Vangelo ad ogni creatura. La spiritualità missionaria di San Vincenzo de Paoli*, a cura di S. Angiuli, Edizioni Vincenziane, Napoli.

²³ CCD XII, 216; SVP XII, 264; SVP.ES XI, 4, 444.

²⁴ CCD XI, 131; SVP XI, 142-148; SVP.ES XI, 3, 65.

²⁵ CCD XII, 357; SVP XI, 402; SVP.ES XI, 3, 281.

²⁶ CCD XI, 203; SVP XI, 216; SVP.ES XI, 132.

²⁷ *Spiritual Writings of Louise de Marillac*, p. 421.

The 350th Anniversary in the Rest of the World

Vincentiana Editorial Board

As noted in the previous article, the Commissions that were created to prepare for the 350th anniversary of the death of Saint Vincent de Paul and Saint Louise de Marillac and for the purpose of involving the whole family in a process of reflection and celebration on these extraordinary events, considered for our celebrations, two places significant places for the whole Vincentian Family: Paris, the cradle of our Founders and their works and the place where the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity is located and Rome, the capital of the Catholic world and the place where the General Curia of the Congregation of the Mission is located. The same Commissions, however, encouraged celebrations and reflections in other places where the Vincentian Family works and ministers on behalf of the poor.

It is impossible to report on all the celebrations that took place in the different parts of the world on the occasion of the 350th anniversary. In NUNTIA, the news bulletin of the Curia of the Congregation of the Mission (see NUNTIA, August-September, 2010), it was reported that VINCENTIANA would gather together the different activities that were realized in commemorating these events and asked that reports on these activities be sent to the General Curia of the Congregation of the Mission. But Vincentians, quicker in doing things than reporting things, have sent in very few reports. What appears here is nothing more than a sampling of the many celebrations that the Vincentian Family offered the world for the glory of God and the benefit of the those people who are poor.

SPAIN

A news article, published in the principal newspapers of the country, announced the celebration of the Jubilee Year and spoke about the Vincentian Family. The article stated:

Madrid, September 22, 2009. On September 27th (the feast of Saint Vincent de Paul), the Vincentian Family will commemorate the

350th anniversary of the death of Saint Vincent de Paul and Saint Louise de Marillac (the precursors of organized social assistance).

The Vincentian Family is present in more than 140 countries and helps, in a direct manner, more than 50 million people throughout the world.

In Spain the Vincentian Family is composed of more than 20,000 members organized in more than 900 centers and dedicated to serving the disadvantaged of our country: homeless people, the unemployed, the sick, prisoners, the aged, children, immigrants and dysfunctional families.

The Vincentian Family in Spain is present in every neighborhood and assists over 200,000 people, upholding their dignity and advocating for social justice on their behalf as they provide services through soup kitchens, educational centers, formation centers, centers for social assistance, centers that distribute food and clothing, home visits, visiting those in hospitals and prisons. Besides being attentive to the situations of poverty in this country, the Vincentian Family of Spain, through the formation of networks with others, collaborates in many other impoverished countries.

Leaving aside all that has been done in the nine provinces of the Daughters of Charity and the four provinces of the Congregation of the Mission, we highlight here three events which were national in their orientation:

The Vincentian Charism Proclaimed to the World

TVE, Spanish National Television, on their program, People of God, transmitted twelve videos (professional and excellent in quality) on the Vincentian charism, present and alive in the midst of the world today in the person of the Vincentian Missionaries and the Daughters of Charity. A list of the titles of these videos will provide some hint as to their content. We list the videos in the order in which they were broadcast:

- 12-17-09 – On the roads of Androy (Madagascar)
- 02-07-10 – Southern Madagascar
- 02-14-10 – Akamasoa: a feast in the garbage dump (Madagascar)
- 03-14-10 – 100 years of cooking dreams (the soup kitchen in Santander, Spain)
- 04-18-10 – Pedro Opeka, the apostle of the garbage dump (Madagascar)
- 05-09-10 – The other Granada (a poor neighborhood in a tourist area)

- 05-23-10 – Another heroine of Cochabamba (solidarity project)
- 06-20-10 – Bolivia, a threatened infancy (project amanecer [project wake up])
- 06-27-10 – Like a great fire (the Daughters of Charity)
- 07-18-10 – In the Andes jungle (El Beni)
- 08-01-10 – The Mission in Madagascar
- 08-08-10 – Traveling in Santa Louisa by the Mamore River (Bolivia)

These can be viewed at: <http://famvin.org/es/archive/350-anniversario-el-carisma-viceciano-en-accion>

The Vincentian Family Congress

The publication, *Anales of the Congregación de la Misión y de las Hijas de la Caridad*, dedicated its issue of May-June 2010 to this Congress which took place in Madrid. We extract the following text from the editorial of said publication:

From March 5-10, 2010 the Congress of the Vincentian Family brought together in Madrid about 600 members of the family.

Its importance is seen not only in the quality of the presenters and the fact that these presenters represent all the branches of the Family but also in the presence of Father Gregory Gay, CM, Superior General and Sister Rosa María Miro, Assistant General representing Mother General. The four Visitors and the nine Visitatrices, all the presidents and directors of the various Associations as well as some civil authorities were present during the Congress. The Congress was concluded with the celebration of the Eucharist that was presided by the Cardinal of Madrid, Don Antonio María Rouco Varela, president of the Episcopal Conference of Spain.

Since all the different branches were present much attention was given to reviving the charism rather than discovering the charism. This process unfolded first through knowledge which engaged the participants in a process of reviewing the sources and the attitudes of the Founders in order to understand their process of discernment and their manner of acting in different situations. Then in light of the present situation the attitudes of the Founders were reinterpreted.

The following conferences were given: Rev. Luis González Carvajal Santabárbara, *The faith of Vincent de Paul in the midst of an unbelieving world*; Patricia Paredes de Nava (AIC), *The spiritual and charitable experience of Vincent de Paul*; Benito Martínez, CM, *The faith of Saint*

Louise in the midst of an individualistic society; Celestino Fernández, CM, Pastoral urgencies and criteria for charitable action and the mission in today's world; Sister María Angeles Infante, DC; The ecclesial and charitable experience of Saint Louise de Marillac.

The following papers were presented: **I. Charity and Mission in the Experience of the AIC**, Flory Navarro, AIC; **II. Charity and Mission in the Experience of the Congregation of the Mission**: 1. In Saint Vincent de Paul, *Corpus Juan Delgado, CM*; 2. Faith and experience in the Congregation of the Mission in Spain today, *Antonio Ruíz García, CM*; 3. Faith and experience in the Congregation of the Mission as lived by the Daughters of Charity and the Missionaries in the present and in the future, *José María Villar, CM*; **III. The Saint Vincent de Paul Society in Spain**, *Carmina Buitrón*; **IV. Charity and Mission in the Daughters of Charity, Present, Past, and Future**, *Sister Magdalena Herrera, DC*; **V. Charity and Mission in the Experience of the Miraculous Medal Association**: 1. Past, present and future; *María Angeles Esteban*; 2. The present state of the exercise of charity in the Association, *María Antonia Egea*; 3. The future of the exercise of charity and mission in the Association, *Jesús Juan Borroy*; **VI. Charity and Mission in the Experience of MISEVI**, *Israel Peralta Pérez – Francisco Berbegal Vázquez, CM*; **VII. Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow in the Vincentian Marian Youth**, *Irene Fernández López*.

The Congress came to a close with the formulation of some concrete conclusions that were spelled out in short-term and long-term lines of action. These lines of action were inspired *by the conviction that the Church is and always will be the servant of the poor or else it runs the risk of becoming something that no longer looks like the church of Jesus Christ. As Vincentians, we commit ourselves today, here and now, to respond with greater solidarity and commitment, thus imitating Saint Vincent, Saint Louise and Blessed Ozanam.* The conclusion and lines and action can be found in the edition of *Anales* that was previously cited.

The Vincentian Week in Salamanca

On August 23, 2010, the XXXV Week of Vincentian Studies was initiated in the provincial house of the Congregation of the Mission, Salamanca. The focus of this week was Saint Vincent and as pointed out by the presenters who had been invited to participate in this event: *we are not dealing with an exposition of Vincent's doctrine and teaching but rather we will attempt to refer to Vincent's lived experience, that is, his personal experience as well as his spiritual experience.* According to

the director of this event, Rev. José Manuel Sánchez Mallo, CM, the presenters remained faithful to this objective (*Anales*, #6, November-December 2010).

We highlight the international dimension of this event. Together with the Spanish presenters (Frs. Antonino Orcajo, José Manuel Villar, José María López Maside, Santiago Barquín, Corpus Juan Delgado, Celestino Fernández, José Ignacio Fernández H. de Mendoza, José Vicente Martínez and Benito Martínez, all of them members of the Congregation of the Mission, and Sister Cristina Calero and Sister María Ángeles Infante, Daughters of Charity), there were two Italian Missionaries: Rev. Luigi Mezzadri and Rev. Mario di Carlo and a French Missionary: Rev. Alain Pérez. Among the three hundred participants there was a group of French Vincentians, a group from the Vincentian Marian Youth and participants from Brazil and Vietnam.

A Daughter of Charity who participated in this seminar wrote the following on Famvin: *The XXXV week of Vincentian Studies coordinated its sessions around the spirituality of Vincent de Paul. The presenters shared their gifts as they helped us unravel the spiritual richness of the great Saint of Charity. I would say with great conviction that there is no Vincent in action without a contemplative Vincent, contemplation which involved looking at Jesus Christ, Vincent's model and source, in order to contemplate him later as the suffering man whom he encountered in countless poor women and men.*

Compiled by: JULIO SUESCUN OLCOZ, C.M.

POLAND

We began preparation for the jubilee to commemorate the 350th anniversary of the death of Saint Vincent de Paul and Saint Louise de Marillac during the January 12, 2008 session of the provincial council. In another session of the council, that of June 12, 2008, we began preparation of the program for the Jubilee Year. Little by little we settled on the program and began to carry it out. Today, after the closing of the Vincentian Year, we can say that we accomplished our plan.

The celebration of the Jubilee was developed on three levels: provincial, local and personal and was composed of three dimensions: spiritual, vocational and material. Here I will describe what took place on the provincial level.

The inauguration of the Jubilee Year was held on September 25-27 in Bydgoszcz in Saint Vincent's parish. The solemn Mass, celebrated on Sunday, September 27th, was presided by Bishop Tadeusz Gocłowski, CM, archbishop-emeritus of Gdansk. Many members of the Vincentian

Family participated in this celebration. The closing ceremony of the Jubilee Year was celebrated on September 10-12 in Varsovia in Holy Cross parish. The principal Mass on Sunday was celebrated by Bishop Tadasz Gocłowski. After this event the celebration of the Jubilee Year was extended to the feast of the conversion of the Saint Paul, the titular feast of the church of our seminary in Cracow, also the location of the provincial house. The solemn Mass was celebrated by Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz, archbishop of Cracow.

The motive for prolonging the celebration was the following: a year before, that is, January 25th, 2010, during the solemn celebration of the feast of the conversion of Saint Paul, Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz blessed three large reliquaries that contained the relics of Saint Vincent and Saint Louise. Thus began the pilgrimage of the relics of our Founders. The relics were received by all of our houses and by the parishes where the Vincentians are ministering. Many houses of the Daughters of the Charity and some diocesan parishes also received the relics. The parishioners prepared for this event with either a spiritual retreat or a popular mission that was directed by our confreres.

A very important event, on the spiritual level, was the visit of the Superior General to Poland, October 31 - November 11, 2009. During this time Father General visited many houses of the Vincentians, the three provincial houses of the Daughters of Charity and some houses of the Daughters of Charity (houses where the Daughters are engaged in special ministries).

During 2010, as has occurred in previous years, time was set aside for nine different occasions during which the confreres were able to make their spiritual retreat. The theme of these retreats was: the message of the Founders and our mission.

During the month of August, 2010, we organized for our seminarians (theologians, philosophers and novices) a pilgrimage to France which allowed them to walk in the footsteps of Saint Vincent. Some young laymen, who are active in our vocational discernment program, also participated in this pilgrimage.

With regard to the spiritual dimension

1. We have translated and published a bi-lingual edition (French-Polish) of Saint Vincent's letters to the confreres who were in Poland. This is our treasure.
2. In front of our parish church in Cracow, dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes, we built a monument to Saint Vincent which was blessed by Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz, the archbishop of Cracow.

Civil authorities from the city and the surrounding areas participated in the blessing ceremony.

3. In the parish church in Zakopane, which is also the Shrine of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal, we built and dedicated an altar to Saint Vincent.
4. In each one of our houses and churches we have placed a commemorative plaque as a visible reminder of the Vincentian Jubilee.
5. Another visible reminder is the stoles and chasubles which were especially made for this occasion.
6. Commemorative medals were made and given to each confrere.
7. Commemorative pens were also made and distributed to the confreres.

Reported by: ADAM BOROWSKI, C.M.

CENTRAL AMERICA

For the Vincentian Family in Central America the celebration of the 350th anniversary of the death of Saint Vincent and Saint Louise provided us with the opportunity to deepen ourselves in our commitment and in living a Vincentian spirituality. At the same time this celebration enabled us to become involved in a process of personal and community renewal and thus strengthened us to carry out on a daily basis our mission and our charitable service on behalf of those people who are poor.

On a general level the material that was prepared by the Heritage Commission was made available as well as holy cards, prayers and prayer services. Later each country celebrated this event in a creative way.

Honduras joined to the celebration of the 350th anniversary the 100th anniversary of the arrival of the Vincentians from Barcelona to the Northern Coast and also honored the four bishops of the Congregation of the Mission who led the Diocese of San Pedro Sula. In a special way we highlight here the celebration that was organized by the missionary team in Moskitia whose members, despite the adversity of the time, carried out the programmed activities with much enthusiasm and did this in the midst of their daily ministry with the poor. The Vincentian Missionary Team in Moskitia is composed of four Missionaries, six Daughters of Charity and three lay missionaries who are members of MISEVI. They organized a gathering in the parish of Santa Cruz de Barra Patuka which took place during September 13-16 and which coincided with the patronal feast of the parish. The Visitor of the Province of Barcelona participated in this celebration. After the

celebration of the Eucharist there was a procession (by boat) along the coast; there were six boats and in each boat there was a Missionary and a Daughter of Charity; this was an extraordinary experience. In the evening there was a presentation of the Miskita culture which consisted of a special rite to remember those who had died.

The Vincentian Family organized a triduum (September 24, 25, 26) in Panama to bring to a close the Jubilee Year. On Friday, September 24 there was a procession with the images of Saint Vincent and Saint Louise which began at the park that surrounds the Metropolitan Cathedral and concluded at the parish of Santa Ana where the Eucharist was celebrated and presided by the Apostolic Nuncio, Bishop Carrascosa Coso. Missionaries, the Daughters of Charity, students, members of the various branches of the Vincentian Family from throughout Panama as well as other lay people who in some way are living out the Vincentian charism participated in the procession and the Eucharist. During the celebration of the Eucharist the Nuncio highlighted Vincentian spirituality and the good that the Vincentian Family has been able to accomplish in the world and in the Church. The Nuncio invited the Vincentian Family to make their mission credible in the world of today, a world that is in much need of said mission.

On September 25 there was a gathering in the afternoon of the whole Vincentian Family in Saint Mary's parish in Balboa. During the afternoon there were numerous exhortations and also a cultural presentation. The day concluded with the celebration of the Eucharist and a dinner. On Sunday, September 26, the celebrations were local with each branch of the Family highlighting their own proper perspective.

El Salvador celebrated the 350th anniversary with national competitions that involved the students in all the schools of the Daughters of Charity (poems and essays about Saint Vincent and Saint Louise). Throughout the year a weekly formation program, *The Vincentian Family in Action*, was developed and transmitted by Radio María (Radio Mary) in El Salvador. There were also meetings of the Vincentian Family and the celebration of the Eucharist for the members of the branches of the Family. It should be pointed out that Bishop Escobar Alas presided at two of the Eucharistic celebrations. The first of these celebrations was celebrated on Sunday, March 14. This involved a procession with the image of Saint Louise de Marillac from the Church of San Jacinto to the Cathedral. The procession was accompanied by the band from Santa Catalina School. In his homily the Bishop congratulated the Vincentian Family, especially the Daughters of Charity. This celebration was broadcast throughout the country by Channel 8, Ágape, a Catholic channel that also transmits through the internet.

The second Eucharist was celebrated on September 19 which included a procession with the image of Saint Vincent de Paul. In the afternoon there was a sharing that involved all the branches of the Vincentian Family and as a sign of solidarity, the sharing of a light meal with the poor. Both celebrations can be viewed at www.youtube.com/com/fevisal

There were also various activities in Guatemala. Among the many events we highlight: opportunities for study and reflection on the twelve themes that were developed for the Jubilee Year, gatherings of the Vincentian Family, design and distribution of holy cards and an art competition.

Perhaps the largest celebration was that which was held at the close of the Jubilee Year. The National Council of the Vincentian Family in Guatemala had initiated preparations for this celebration with much anticipation. All the branches of the Family and other groups related to the Family, for example, former students of the Casa Central, (Motherhouse), Friends of Sister Cecilia Charrin, the Catholic Association of Love and Action, and students from the schools of the Daughters of Charity were involved in developing the various activities. The closing of the Jubilee Year was celebrated with a Triduum, September 24-25-26. This provided each branch with an opportunity to celebrate the 27th on a local level and to do this in a creative manner.

On September 24 the Triduum began with the celebration of the Eucharist in the Motherhouse and was presided by Bishop Mario Enrique Rios Montt, CM, Auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Guatemala and the Vicar-General.

Saturday, September 25 began with fireworks and mariachis singing the *mañanitas* to Saint Vincent and Saint Louise. This festive and emotional event took place in the Miraculous Medal Chapel of the historical Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity

After the celebration of community prayer, a procession with the images of Saint Vincent and Saint Louise began its pilgrimage to the Metropolitan Cathedral. Despite the inclement weather many people, singing with great joy, accompanied the images of the Saints in procession. People, very emotional and with tears in their eyes, applauded as the images were brought into the Cathedral where many in the congregation shouted out the names of Saint Vincent and Saint Louise.

The Eucharistic celebration began at 10:00am and was presided by the Cardinal-Archbishop Rodolfo Quezada Toruño, who was accompanied by Bishop Rodolfo Bobadilla Mata, CM, Missionaries who minister in the capital and the Vincentian seminarians. The celebration was graced by the Choir from the Normal School of

the Motherhouse, young men and women whose songs and praise and harmony provided added beauty to the liturgy.

In his homily the Cardinal referred to the manner in which Vincent and Louise joined together in their efforts to create a strong lay movement within the Catholic Church, one that began during the XVII century and has continued to the present day, a movement that was initiated long before the Church, at the time of the Second Vatican Council, opened the way for greater participation of the laity. He pointed out that their communities are the only ones that can say that their presence in the country has been uninterrupted. He also expressed his hope that his ministry as Archbishop would not be concluded before the Sister of the poor, Sister Cecelia Charrin (a woman whom the Cardinal knew and admired) was canonized. Finally, he invited the lay branches of the Vincentian Family to remain faithful to their charism, faithful to the Vincentian principles and doctrine which can be summarized as giving life to the gospel of Christ in service to the poor.

The third day, September 26, a cultural act was presented in the Auditorium of the Normal School of the Motherhouse. During this presentation the president of the National Council of the Vincentian Family in Guatemala welcomed the people who had gathered together with words that described the historical events that were being celebrated. The Visitatrix of the Daughters of Charity in Central America, Sister Rosa Elvira Gómez, spoke about the significance of this Jubilee Year *in a globalized world where the globalization of charity is most urgent and demands of us, who follow in the path of Saint Vincent and Saint Louise, union, creativity, boldness, and organization*. This reflection was made at the beginning of the celebration, before signing hymns in honor of Saint Vincent and Saint Louise and other cultural acts that were presented as meditations and reflections on Vincentian spirituality.

The closing Eucharist was celebrated by the Apostolic Nuncio, Bishop Paul Richard Gallagher.

The celebrations of Sunday, September 26 focused on the words of the Archbishop who in his Sunday homily emphasized the manner in which the cardinal referred to the celebration of the Vincentian Family on the occasion of the 350th anniversary of the death of Saint Vincent and Saint Louise and said: *Thanks to God they continue to live through their sons and daughters, men and women religious, laymen and laywomen who serve the people of Guatemala and the people of the world*.

PHILIPPINES

Three hundred fifty years ago, Vincent de Paul lay dying in bed, in France, without knowing anybody in the Philippines who would care to pray for him. After 350 years, St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac had one of their greatest celebrations in the Philippines, more than half way around the globe. The Congregation of the Mission, the Daughters of Charity, the members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, the Ladies of Charity, Vincentian Marian Youth and other members of the Vincentian Lay Organizations poured their enthusiasm in memory of their Founder.

One year in advance, in 2009, the Vincentians and the Daughters of Charity spearheaded the preparations by appointing a committee to prepare for the 350th anniversary. There were many meetings which discussed the various proposals and a year long program of activities was set up. There were monthly conferences on St. Vincent and St. Louise with as many as two hundred persons in attendance, there were novenas of Masses, film showing; banners were posted in strategic places in Vincentians schools, houses and churches; there were holy pictures (stampitas) bearing the pictures of St. Vincent and St. Louise with the schedule of activities and invitations sent for the big celebration on September 27. Some members of the Vincentian Family initiated a “meal with the poor” where dozens of poor street persons were invited. Adamson University instituted the “First St. Vincent de Paul Awards” on September 26, 2010.

The logo of the 350th Anniversary, sent from the Curia Generalizia, was displayed in hundreds of locations throughout the country and was reproduced electronically, in print and verbally discussed in the dozens of conferences. “Charity and Mission” summarized most of the conferences, though some were really scholarly talks on the life, spirituality, and works of St. Vincent and St. Louise. Thousands of persons attended the conferences, masses, novenas, and appreciated the spiritual and charitable legacy of St. Vincent and St. Louise.

Worth highlighting because of its long term effects is the heritage program: “Deepening the Spirituality of our Vincentian Charism.” It was composed of bi-monthly lectures, zarzuela (drama presentations), Vincentian photo exhibits, and Vincentian Youth Congress. The “San Vicente: A Zarzuela”, produced by Adamson University was one of the most significant plays presented during the year. Other CM-DC schools also had plays presenting the lives of St. Louise and St. Vincent. Many of the lectures were quite good and some of the contents were published in the Vincentian News, the monthly newsletter of the Philippine Province.

The Eucharistic Celebration on September 27, 2010 was held at the Manila Metropolitan Cathedral with His Eminence Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales as main celebrant in the presence of Bishop Edward Joseph Adams, the papal nuncio, several Bishops, hundreds of Vincentians (headed by Fr. Rolando Santos, the Provincial Visitor and his Provincial Council), Diocesan priests and other members of various religious congregations, the Daughters of Charity and the Vincentian Lay Organizations and thousand of lay people. On the same day, other Vincentian houses celebrated the end of the year-long celebration with solemn Mass generally presided by the Ordinary of the place.

Project. The Vincentian Family Coordination Council of the Philippines (VFCC-Philippines) decided to set up several projects in memory of the 350th Anniversary of St. Vincent and St. Louise:

1. Assistance to the youth who are enrolled in the Alternative Learning System with a component on skills development;
2. Insertion in any existing project of any branch of the Vincentian family employing systemic change principles;
3. On the regional level, the VFCC of the region could make their choice as to where they can work and serve together, i.e. in housing, scholarship, income generating micro loans, etc.

The 350th Anniversary Celebrations was a year of grace, renewal, and formation for the Vincentian Family in the Philippines. Through the various programs, many people got to know more of the legacy of St. Vincent and St. Louise and, hopefully, will help in transforming their lives into a more socially pro-poor mode. Needless to say, the Vincentians and the Daughters of Charity, in so many intangible and down- to- earth ways, were the prime beneficiaries of the 350th Anniversary. May God bless the Philippine Province and their collaborators for showing such love and devotion to the Patrons of the Poor.

Reported by: ROLANDO DELAGOZA SOLLEZA, C.M.

BRAZIL

The Vincentian Family in Brazil, with 22 branches active throughout the country, celebrated the 350th anniversary of the death of Saint Vincent de Paul and Saint Louise de Marillac. It was a very significant time which began with the XI National Encounter in Brasilia where under the theme, *systemic change*, preparations were begun for the Jubilee Year. This was a pivotal moment because the greater majority of the branches were present in this encounter which accepted with great enthusiasm the proposal to encourage Vincentian ministry

with and for the poor, assisting them to overcome their situation of vulnerability.

We highlight the following activities there were carried out during this Jubilee Year:

- a) Reflections on the theme *Charity-Mission*: twelve reflection that were prepared by members of the Vincentian Family were very helpful. Besides being distributed broadly through the internet (e-mail and different links), a book was published (20,000 copies) which contained this material. The majority of the conferences of the Saint Vincent de Paul Society used this book as spiritual reading for their members. The other branches throughout the country utilized this book to deepen their understanding of the Vincentian charism and Vincentian spirituality.
- b) Distribution of different materials: throughout the country the branches of the family used the logo *Charity-Mission* to make banners, folders, shirts and other materials that were then distributed. Books, articles and other papers were published in the media using radio, magazines, internet, blogs, etc.
- c) Pilgrimage of the relics of Saint Vincent: during the Jubilee Year this pilgrimage of the relics through various regions and cities of Brazil provided us with the opportunity to hold gatherings for prayer, reflection, Eucharistic celebrations and also established closer bonds between the branches of the Vincentian Family. This was a time of great community and spiritual enrichment.
- d) Celebrations and gatherings for prayer and formation: on a regional level (Curitiba, São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Belo Horizonte, Brasilia, Recife, Fortaleza, Belém) and in other areas celebrations and encounters were organized. At the time of the opening of the Jubilee Year and on the feasts of Saint Louise de Marillac and Saint Vincent de Paul, there were large celebrations which showed incredible creativity and involved participation of the poor and the members of the Vincentian Family.
- e) Joint action on behalf of the mission and service: during the Jubilee Year we encouraged and strengthened collaboration among the branches of the Vincentian Family, collaboration that was made concrete through action on behalf of the poor. There were many such initiatives and here we highlight the following: the professors and the students in the schools of the Daughters of Charity in the Province of Curitiba organized groups in order to reflect on the Vincentian mission and at the same time, were able to gather together resources to assist the socio-educational project of Manjangué in Mozambique. The National Directors of the Saint Vincent de Paul Society used the theme *Charity-Mission* to evaluate and plan their future work under the

slogan *change in order to transform*. With the counsel of individuals from the other branches the Saint Vincent de Paul Society is involved in missions in several regions and is also encouraging reflection and action in order to provide a dynamic dimension to the spirituality and ministry of the more than 200,000 Brazilian Vincentians.

The fruits of the Jubilee Year: the various activities that were organized during the Jubilee Year provided spiritual growth to the Vincentian Family. These activities awakened a desire for greater enthusiasm for ministry, greater reflection and knowledge about the realities and the challenges of the poor, formulation of joint projects among the different branches of the Vincentian Family, better knowledge about the daily work of the other branches of the family as they minister for the benefit of the poor and above all these activities awakened great interest and renewed strength to continue the ministry with the poor, *our lords and masters*.

In recent years in Brazil conditions have become better and poverty has decreased but still 11.2 million people are hungry or at risk of going hungry because they lack social and economic resources. The Jubilee Year points out the need for the Vincentian Family to continue to strengthen themselves so that they can continue their work with new enthusiasm, new methods and new expressions, joining forces among themselves and with the poor and with all those who seek to combat social injustice in order to build a just society in which people live in solidarity with one another.

Reported by: MIZAÉL DONIZETTI POGGIOLI, C.M.

CHILE

Closing of the Vincentian Jubilee Year in Santiago, Chile

On September 25th, 2010, with the massive participation of the faithful, members of the distinct branches of the Vincentian Family, especially people from Santiago and Valparaíso, a Mass was celebrated in Chile to conclude the celebration of the 350th anniversary of the death of Saint Vincent de Paul and Saint Louise de Marillac.

The Mass was celebrated in Cerro San Cristobal in the capital, beneath the image of the Immaculate Conception. The Visitor of the Province, Father Fernando Macías, CM, presided at the Eucharist that was concelebrated by several Missionaries of the Province who work in Santiago and Valparaíso. This place receives many pilgrims from numerous Church groups, especially young people. As Father Fernando pointed out in his homily, Chile, even before the arrival of the Spanish,

was consider a place of encounter with the divine and thus its original name in Mapudungun was *Tupahue*, which means *the place of God*. In 1987, during his visit to Chile, Pope John Paul II came to this place and blessed the city of Santiago.

The members of the Vincentian Family had to walk approximately three kilometers in order to arrive at Cerro San Cristobal, the place of the celebrations (the authorities had prohibited access to buses). No one remained below where the buses had to park and people exerted much effort to arrive at the place of celebration, children, teenagers, adults and many elderly people.

Before the celebration of the Eucharist, a band from one of the schools of the Saint Vincent de Paul Society, created an environment with their music as the pilgrims arrived. The celebration was very festive and colorful and the assembly fully participated. There was dance, an offering of very meaningful gifts, powerful and encouraging hymns, a dynamic and profound homily.

In this way the Vincentian Family in Chile, on the occasion of celebration of the passover of our Founders from this life to a new birth in heaven, honored these two great individuals who committed their lives to the Church and the world. This celebration was marked by giving thanks to God for these two saints, for their charism which has been passed on to us and asking for the strength to commit ourselves to the continuation of the mission (in our present situation), a mission which they began in Frances three and half centuries ago.

On Monday, the feast of Saint Vincent de Paul, celebrations were held in different places.

Reported by: CARLOS DE LA RIVERA C.M.

MEXICO

Vincentians: passion and action moving the world

*Three and a half centuries
Have not been able to silence
The majestic movement
Of his holy charity...*

José Luis Rodríguez (a former Vincentian Seminarian from San Luis Potosi) used these words when referring to our saints: Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac, founders and inspirers of many groups of the Vincentian Family whose ministry is one of evangelization and service to those persons who are most poor.

One year ago, during the gathering of the Vincentian Family in the Federal District, the State of Mexico and Morelos, three of our brothers

from REVIVO (reencounter of Vincentians with their vocation... a group of former Vincentian seminarians): Telésforo Ruano, Francisco Ireta and Guillermo Vergara asked Father Luis Lusarreta CM (the person responsible for organizing this event) if they could organize said event for the following year. Father Luis agreed and gave us a vote of confidence and we are very grateful that he believed in us.

Six months before the event, we began to bring together representatives of the groups who organized such an event: the Vincentian Volunteers, the Miraculous Medal Association, the Saint Vincent de Paul Society, the Daughters of Charity, the Vincentian Marian Youth and the Congregation of the Mission. Our group, REVIVO, was always supported by Sister María de Jesús Camacho, DC and Father Servando Sánchez Ayala, CM.

We decided to put together an outline of the plan which we then shared with the representatives from the branches of the Vincentian Family. During this first meeting we agreed that said gathering would take place on Saturday, September 18th, 2010.

Little by little we began to understand the fact that we had taken on a great commitment when we accepted responsibility for organizing the closing event of the Jubilee Year which commemorated the 350 anniversary of the death and the fullness of life of Saint Vincent de Paul and Saint Louise de Marillac. This gave us greater motivation to involve ourselves in this matter and to utilize all the gifts and talents that God had given us and that we wanted to share by becoming involved with the Vincentian Family.

We soon saw the need to have more frequent meetings at the Vincentian Mission Center and to bring together the representatives of the Vincentian Family in order to continue to plan this event. At different times another group of REVIVO met in the house of Rogelio Ruano (Colonia La Impulsora, State of Mexico) to practice the music for the celebration.

We also decided that by way of immediate preparation the team would arrive at the seminary on Friday, September 17th in order to prepare everything that would be needed for our Vincentian Jubilee celebration: organizing chairs, final music practice under the direction of Rogelio Ruano, preparing sound system and instruments with the assistance of Ramón Isol, arranging computer connection for possible simultaneous transmission with the Father-General, the successor of Saint Vincent and for registration purposes (Pascual Torres).

Some of us did not sleep that night and therefore were wide awake to receive a group of young people who arrived at 5:00am from Acuitzio, Michoacan, a place where a Vincentian Popular Mission had recently been given. This mission appears to have motivated many young people to become involved in the work that we were doing.

During the rainy morning of this long awaited day the Vincentian Family began to arrive. They were welcomed by Rubén Aguilar, Carlos Sánchez and Abraham Ramos who also accompanied the participants to the auditorium where they were able to register (480 people registered). The participants were given name tags and folders which contained an outline of the primary theme, the program and music.

After registration the participants were divided into groups of 15-20 people and brought to Sister María de Jesús Camacho, DC who welcomed them and led them in a group dynamic. Then the participants went to different rooms where they would view a video that had been prepared for the different groups:

- a) Groups already known: Vincentian Volunteers, Miraculous Medal Association, the Daughters of Charity Vincentian Missionaries and Vincentian Marian Youth introduced themselves (through video) to the new groups that are coming into existence, Vincentian Special Catechists, REVIVO and those working at the Vincentian Mission Center.
- b) Groups that represent the newest members of the Vincentian Family introduced themselves (through video) to the more known and recognized groups of the Vincentian Family (mentioned above).

After these introductions the participants were invited to take their respective places on the soccer field, the most adequate place for our general meeting. We attempted to begin on time and so at 10:00am the master of ceremonies, Ricardo Ponce, extended a welcome to the whole Vincentian Family and exhorted everyone to enjoy the day and take advantage of this festive occasion. Then the presence of the different groups was recognized: the Vincentian Volunteers, the Daughters of Charity, the Miraculous Medal Association, the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul and two new groups that have become integrated into the family, the Vincentian Special Catechists and REVIVO (a group of former Vincentian seminarians). Different groups of religious women were also present (the Missionaries of Mary Immaculate, the Missionary Daughters), friends and family.

Previously the Visitors had been introduced, Sister Braciela Rubio Moncada, DC and Father Silviano Calderón Soltero, CM who in turn engaged in a creative and delightful dialogue between themselves, speaking as though the saints were alive today and in our midst and thus exhorting us to be faithful to the heritage that has been entrusted to us as members of the Vincentian Family.

The next time was led by Sister Maria de Jesús Camacho, who with her characteristic creativity in its dynamics, got everyone moving to live together, fit into the group and be in keeping with the main

reason of our meeting: to deepen the knowledge of Saint Vincent and Saint Louise.

A powerful time of formation was created by Telésforo Ruano Lira (REVIVO) who in a very profound way and supported by a specialist in Saint Louise de Marillac, Father Benito Martinez, CM, led us by the hand to know in a new way this great saint who ALWAYS WALKED, EVEN AT NIGHT.

After sharing in groups and then putting forth the more interesting conclusions in a plenary session we had a time for some coffee, tea, and cookies that were offered to us by the Miraculous Medal Association.

Immediately after this short break we were invited to participate in and enjoy some group dynamics that were led by the Vincentian Marian Youth. Then in a short period of time the Daughters of Charity offered us a very delightful meal.

After the meal there was a presentation given by our good friend, Pascual Torres (priest coordinator of REVIVO) who in a simple way exhorted and motivated us to continue to work in the way that we are: as a Vincentian Family that has received a great heritage and that desires, through its passion and action, to continue to influence the world.

Then, as a family, we practiced the music for the Mass and after, went to three different rooms where a series of interviews were held with some Daughters of Charity and Vincentian Missionaries who shared with us their vocation story, their view of the present state of the Vincentian Family and what they felt was needed in order that we be more faithful to our vocation.

As the close of our celebration was drawing near REVIVO recognized the former Visitors and Visitatrices for their ministry and for their work as those primarily responsible for the Vincentian Family in Mexico. The Daughters of Charity who were recognized: Sister Adela Orea, DC, Sister Mercedes León, DC, Sister Nidelvia, DC, Sister Mercedes Días, DC, and Sister Graciela Rubio Moncada, DC (the present Visitatrix). The Missionaries who were recognized were: Father Ramón Belmonte, CM, Father Vicente de Dios, CM, Father Benjamín Romo, CM, Father Manuel González, CM, Father Luis Arreola, CM, and Father Silviano Calderón, CM (the present Visitor).

At 5:00 pm we gathered to celebrate the Eucharist that was presided by Father Silvano Calderón, CM. It was obvious that the participants were grateful and happy to be able share in ministerial experiences that have unfolded during these past 350 years both here in Mexico and throughout the world. It is with joy that we now have the presence of two new groups of the Vincentian Family in Mexico. Father Calderón emphasized some of the difficult work that is now before us.

In closing we hope that everyone will do their part as Vincentians so that we might continue to influence the world with our passion and action as we engage in the mission of evangelization and service of the poor.

Reported by: ALFONSO SÁNCHEZ BARRETO
(del grupo REVIVO)

INDIA

The Indian provinces of the Congregation of the Mission and of the Daughters of Charity had organized several programs in connection of the 350th heavenly birth anniversary of St. Vincent and St. Louis.

In the Southern Indian Provinces of the C.M. and D.C., the jubilee programs were organized towards three-fold goals:

1. *For deepening Vincentian identity*

Five days of Vincentian retreat followed by 3 days of Vincentian seminar were organized in 4 batches together with the Daughters of Charity of Southern India. Two Vincentian priests from the Vincentian Congregation — Rev. Fr. Antony Plackal V.C. and Rev. Fr. James Chelapurath V.C., preached the retreats while some of our confreres and Daughters were the resource persons for the seminar.

Two weeks of intensive study-seminar on Vincentian matters were organized at Mysore for the entire Vincentian Family of India. Selected persons from various branches of the family participated in it, who would in turn be resource persons within their own branches or to one another in future.

Vincentian heritage, Vincentian Spirituality, Vincentian understanding of the poor and social work with systemic change in view, Vincentian leadership, and Vincentian Missiology were some of the topics studied in detail.

2. *For making St. Vincent and his charism known to others*

- a) A souvenir has been published highlighting the Vincentian charism heritage and apostolate in India.
- b) An all India level essay completion for seminarians and religious was conducted and prizes were awarded with the aim of motivating seminarians and religious to do studies on St. Vincent.
- c) A quiz completion book on the Vincentian Saints and Vincentian Family was published by our major seminarians with the aim of

deepening the quest for knowledge about the Vincentian saints and Vincentian Family.

- d) Mementos like jubilee prayer, jubilee card, key chains, pocket calendar, annual calendar were prepared and distributed.
- e) CD on the activities of the Province together with the D.C. is being brought out.
- f) Solemn Eucharistic celebrations were organized in the province level and in the local level with the participation of the Vincentian family, diocesan clergy, other religious, laity and the poor.

3. For closer communion with the poor

- a) The province decided to strengthen its assistance and service to the poor in a concrete way. For this a social work Organization (NGO) "PRATHEEKSHA" (which literally means hope) was registered in the state of Karnataka. Under the leadership of Rev. Fr. Davis Kachappilly C.M. the organization is helping poor children with education, medical needs and job oriented trainings. The organization is assisting mainly children, women and elderly in need at present and hopes to expand its service to the needy of other areas in the future.
- b) As a jubilee memorial, the social work coordinator of the province, Rev. Fr. Sebastian Anthikad C.M. has set up a dispensary and staff quarters at Bapulapad (Andhra Pradesh) and a mobile clinic with an ambulance and staff nurses mainly to identify and assist the AIDS victims. The SABS (Sisters Adorers of the Blessed Sacrament) are collaborating with him in this work. He dreams of a big centre having a HOSPICE for AIDS patients and two separate hostels for boys and girls orphaned by AIDS (but negative). If God inspires generous souls to assist the project, this would become a reality soon giving solace to hundreds of hapless poor patients and victims.
- c) A scholarship fund was set up for enabling some catholic students from our parishes to complete their university studies (specifically job oriented trainings). Some special requests for financial help, from domestic servants of our communities who have worked with us at least for five continuous years, for construction of houses or for marriage expenses or for treatment were respected.
- d) Besides theses, local level help to the poor were organized by each community.

4. *A grand Concluding ceremony*

Was organized at DPIRS Mysore on 27th of September. Rt. Rev. Thomas Antony Vazhappilly, the Bishop of Mysore was the presiding celebrant while Rt. Rev. Thomas Thiruthalil C.M. Bishop of Balasore broke the word of God. Several confreres, Daughters of Charity, priests, religious, dignitaries and lay faithful were present for the occasion. It has certainly inspired many to follow the saints of charity by being champions of the poor.

The North Indian

The Province of the Congregation of the Mission together with the North Indian Province of Daughters of Charity, in connection with the 350th Death anniversary of St. Vincent and St. Louise De Marillac, arranged programs in four levels:

1. *Programs for the laity in the parishes and institutional communities*

Most of the Vincentian Parish priests and institutional heads have arranged seminar sessions and study classes for various groups like hostel children, youth, mothers, school children etc. A commission consisting of two CM fathers and one DC sister was formed to prepare study materials and power point presentation of the history, life and works of St. Vincent and St. Louise De Marillac which were used in the seminar and study sessions in the parishes and institutions. Dramas on Vincentian themes and various competitions were conducted in the parishes and institutions in connection with the 350th death anniversary of St. Vincent and St. Louis De Marillac.

2. *Programs for Personal renewal for the members of Vincentian Family*

A three-day seminar was conducted for the Vincentian confreres and Daughters. The seminar was conducted by Fr. Hugh O'Donnell former director of the CIF Program in Paris. The seminar was conducted in two batches from 3-6 and 7-10 September 2010. Participants were taken through the life journey St. Vincent and St. Louis and participants were asked to reflect on the life journey of the Vincentians in the present day situations. The seminar was intended for personal renewal and the strengthening the Vincentian spirit.

3. Programs in solidarity with the poor

In connection with the 350th death anniversary of St. Vincent and St. Louise De Marillac the Vincentians of the North Indian province decided to make 20 new houses and repair 100 partially damaged houses of victims of Khandhamal violence to express our solidarity with the victims of communal violence. Besides this, we have decided to give free education to 30 poor children in our English medium schools to mark the 350th death anniversary of St. Vincent and St. Louis. They will be given free lodging and boarding and their other educational expenses will be met by the province.

4. Programs for promoting Vincentian literary materials

In connection with the 350th death anniversary of St. Vincent and St. Louise De Marillac we have initiated to promote Vincentian literary materials. We have produced the following:

- Five year planner (book), from 2010 to 2015, with quotes from Vincent de Paul,
- A Vincentian Missal (in English and Oriya),
- A music CD containing songs related to St. Vincent and St. Louis de Marillac.

5. We had a grand concluding ceremony on 11th September 2010

On 11th September 2010 at Aquinas College, Gopalpur-on-Sea, the Solemn Jubilee Eucharistic celebration was officiated by Rt. Rev. Thomas Thiruthalil, C.M (Bishop of Balasore). The presence of Rt. Rev. Sarat Chandra Nayak (Bishop of Berhampur), Very. Rev. Fr. Varghese Thottamkara, C.M (Assistant General of the Congregation of the Mission) and many priests (both diocesan and religious), other consecrated women and men and eminent well wishers added grandeur to the joyful celebration. After the Holy Eucharist, a special cultural event was arranged in the auditorium of Aquinas College. During the programme a short power point presentation was done by DC Sisters and CM Confreres, on St. Vincent's and St. Louise's life history, background of both Congregations' beginning and important activities. Talks were given by both Bishops and Provincials on the importance of this special occasion.

Reported by: VARGHESE THOTTAMKARA, C.M.
and MATHEW KALLAMACKAL, C.M.

COLOMBIA

Jubilee Gathering of the Province

On September 1-2, 2010 we celebrated the Jubilee Encounter of the Province. The idea for this gathering was presented during the Provincial Assembly, 2009 and happily, this idea became a reality.

In accord with the plan, this encounter was developed in four “moments.” The first “moment” took place on Wednesday morning and provided the confreres, involved in different areas of ministry, with an opportunity to speak about the ways in which the Vincentians in Colombia are attempting to serve the Church and the poor and at the same time are also attempting to give new life to the charism, mission, parishes, houses of formation, diocesan seminaries while accompanying the branches of the Vincentian Family. There are also other areas where the Vincentians are ministering. The second “moment,” which occurred during the afternoon, responded to the desire of the confreres to know in further detail the development and the work of the recent General Assembly.

The Eucharistic celebration, presided by Father Noel Mojica, gathered together our prayers of thanksgiving and our prayers of supplication and these were placed before the Lord of the harvest. In the evening we participated in a Marian celebration which was organized and creatively planned by the local community of Chinauta. This celebration provided us with the opportunity to recall the many profound Vincentian reflection themes that had been presented to us during the course of the Jubilee Year. In the presence of Saint Vincent and Saint Louise, with the spirituality and the witness of their lives, the candles that we lighted on Mary’s altar allowed us to experience the commitment of creative fidelity to the mission.

The second session had the addition of a very significant element, namely, the presence of the theologians from Villa Paúl. The two morning sessions (one session in which we divided ourselves according to age and then a plenary session) were dedicated to sharing significant missionary experiences, anecdotes and events which everyone has had at some time and which for some reason are inscribed in an indelible manner in our memory. Indeed it is true that remembering is living.

Guided by Father Carlos Albeiro Velásquez we were led in praying a rosary of historical remembrance. During each decade of Mary’s prayer we were reminded of significant Provincial events that occurred from the time of the arrival of the first sons of Saint Vincent to our land.

Our Provincial gathering was closed with the celebration of the Eucharist that had been prepared by the theologians and presided by

the Visitor. We were reminded of the fact the we, as beneficiaries, have been entrusted with a demanding spiritual and charismatic heritage, Our giving of ourselves in service to those who are poor and our living out of the gospel values expressed in the vows have to be done in the context of radical and effective lifestyles in which we hand over our lives in an unambiguous manner.

Activities in other houses

La Apostólica, Santa Rosa de Cabal: September 4, celebration with the youngest members of the Vincentian Marian Youth; September 9-10, celebration with the members of the Vincentian Family and the professors at the San Vicente de Pereira School; September 23, 24, 25 and 26, celebration of the Jubilee Triduum and gathering with poor people in the Miraculous Medal Shrine.

Cali: September 23, 24, 25 Jubilee Triduum and sharing a meal with street people; September 26, closing of the Jubilee Year in the Cathedral of Cali; September 27, meeting with the missionaries of Santa Rosa de Cabal.

Cartago: During the Jubilee Year we reflected on the papers that were published for this occasion; September 17-19 provincial meeting of JUCOVIS; September 24, Vincent Family Banquet pro Hogar de Paso San José; September 27, each branch of the Vincentian Family had a luncheon with the poor.

Ibagué: September 18, Vincentian youth gathering, festive celebration; September 26, solemn closing in the Cathedral, food distributed to poor families.

Las Mercedes, Bogotá: September 25, celebration in Sibaté with the Daughters of Charity, young women and men and employees.

Medellin Sepavi: September 25, closing of the Jubilee Year in the Cathedral of Medellin with the whole Vincentian Family.

Popayán: September 23, 24, 25 the Vincentian Family celebrated a triduum in honor of Saint Vincent; September 26, closing of the Jubilee year with the celebration of the Eucharist in the Cathedral-Basilica of Our Lady of the Assumption; sharing with people living on the street.

Region Rwanda-Burundi: September 27, Solemn Eucharistic celebration with students, missionaries and the Vincentian Family.

Santa Maria: September 27, Eucharistic celebration in different places.

Tierradentro: September 27-28, Eucharistic celebration with the Bishop and the Vincentian Family; also the 105th anniversary of ministry in this place.

Villa Paúl, Funza: September 5, retreat with the members of the lay biblical school on being a Vincentian; September 11, meeting of the Vincentian Family; September 25, meeting with the beneficiaries of our social ministry; September 25, Vincentian cultural celebration with the municipal community; September 19-26, Biblical-Vincentian Week in the municipal neighborhoods; September 26, closing of the Jubilee Year in the Cathedral of Bogotá; September 27, celebration of the Solemnity of Saint Vincent with the presence of eight theologians who pronounced their vows during said celebration.

Reported by: Province Colombia

U.S.A.

Province of Albany, New York

- Daughters of Charity at St. John's University:
 - The 350th year began and ended with special liturgies for the University communities.
 - Every month during the year in the Residence Newsletter an article appeared focusing on some aspect of the Life of Vincent and/or Louise, and this letter goes out to all resident students (over 3,000 students).
- Sister Patricia Ann O'Brien gave talks during the year to the Women in Leadership Group on the life of Vincent and of Louise.
- The Daughters of Charity in Holbrook, MA involved St. Joseph Parish in several ways:
 - Throughout the year the Sisters wrote several articles in the Church Bulletin about the history of the Community and about our Community Saints.
- At DePaul Provincial House on September 12 the Affiliates of the Daughters of Charity of the Northeast Province gathered.
- At the Rourke Center in Troy, NY:
 - The Sisters and members focused on the impact of St. Vincent's and St. Louise's vision left to us, the heritage through which we continue to serve the poor. The members who participate

in the arts program, people who are living in poverty, participated in an exhibition sponsored by Niagara University during their week of celebration. The exhibition, *Creative to Infinity: The Vision Continues*, displayed 29 works of art, 24 of which represented the Rourke Center artists.

- Currently, Sister Loretta Hoag, DC is working on a sculpture of St. Louise with St. Vincent Collaborators with a Vision that will be cast in bronze. It will be about 16-18 inches tall. It should be available to the public and Community by September 2011.

Montreal, Quebec, Canada

On September 27, 2010 the Daughters of Charity of the Montreal house (Albany Province) celebrated the 350 anniversary of the death of St. Vincent and of St. Louise de Marillac with all of the Vincentian Family, including several members of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, some Religious of Saint Vincent de Paul, the deacons and their spouses of the Vincentian Association of Permanent Deacons, the Sisters of Providence (a Community that adopted the Constitutions of the Daughters of Charity).

The celebration was presided over by Monsignor André Gazaile, Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdioceses of Montreal and took place at the Cathedral of Marie-Reine-du Monde in Montreal. It was interesting to note that Monsignor Gazaile motto is "The Charity of Christ urges us."

In his homily, Monsignor Gazaile expressed himself thus: "What is striking, is to discover the extraordinary richness of the heritage of Saint Vincent de Paul and of St. Louise de Marillac, Besides extraordinary richness of their own foundations, they also inspired quantities of other religious communities, movements, and associations who witness to the love and service of the poor and who took seriously this preference of Jesus for the poor and the little ones, by consecrating their lives and showing us the way."

Reported by: LOUISE GALLAHUE, D.C.

Emmitsburg Province

Main activities in the province to celebrate the 350th anniversary

During the March 2010 On-going Formation meeting for the Province, a special EVENSONG to mark this event was celebrated in the Basilica of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton followed by a reception.

Many Sisters in the local communities of the Province participated in the alternative gift giving for Haiti and ritualized the giving with a prayer service. Through the Vincentian Family Coordinator information on Zafen was distributed to Affiliates of the province, Women of Charity (former daughters), at Vincentian Family Gatherings and other local events.

Several local communities showed the DVD “Vincent DePaul; Charity’s Saint” to parishioners, affiliates, Women of Charity, occasionally along with a “Poor Man’s Supper” for participants.

Reported by: CLAIRE DEBES, D.C.

St. Louis Province

San Antonio, Texas: The Vincentian Family of San Antonio gathered for a 350th Anniversary Mass of Thanksgiving on September 11 at St. Vincent de Paul Church in San Antonio. The retired Bishop Flanagan and Rev. Kevin Fausz, CM, concelebrated. Over 220 members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Ladies of Charity, Affiliates, Daughters of Charity, Former DCs, co-workers and collaborators celebrated the Vincentian charism alive in San Antonio.

Waco, Texas: September 29, 2010, the Daughters of Charity and Providence Hospital in Waco provided a free meal of vegetable soup, bread, salad and fruit, for over 2,400 staff members, doctors, volunteers, Affiliates and family members to recognize the 350th Anniversary of St. Vincent and St. Louise. It is becoming a tradition to have a St. Vincent’s meal each year and celebrate the roots of our mission and ministries.

Austin, Texas: About 40 of our physicians, board members, associates, staff and some spouses just returned from a Seton Family of Hospitals Heritage Tour in France. When they visited our Chapel at the Mother House, they heard a presentation on the 350th anniversary.

September 26, 2010, the St. Vincent de Paul Society of the Austin Diocese hosted a celebration for the Ladies of Charity, the Daughters of Charity and other members of the Vincentian Family at St. Anthony

Marie Claret Church in Kyle, Texas. The Most Reverend Bishop Joseph Vasquez, Bishop of Austin, celebrated a mass at 10 a.m. followed by a catered lunch for over 200 people.

St. Louis, Missouri and East St. Louis, Illinois

On Saturday, August 21, over 150 members gathered for service projects to see the face of Christ in those persons who are poor and needy. The Day of Service was followed by an apostolic reflection at each of the 16 service sites. On Sunday, August 22, over 600 members of the Vincentian Family gathered at the Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis to thank God for his many blessings. The Most Reverend Robert J. Carlson, Archbishop of Saint Louis, presided at the afternoon liturgy and the Reverend G. Gregory Gay, CM, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity, delivered the homily. Fr. Gregory emphasized that the mission of charity calls all members of the Vincentian Family to practice charity that is personal, practical and political. The offertory collection of almost \$3,000 will benefit a Haiti Reforestation Project of ZAFEN — a joint micro-finance project of the worldwide Vincentian Family, Fonkoze, DePaul University and Haitian Hometown Association Resource Group.

Reported by: MARY WALZ, D.C.

THE REGION OF BELGIUM

On the occasion of the closing of the Jubilee Year for the Vincentian Family in Belgium, the Superior General, Father G. Gregory Gay and the Assistant General, Father Stanislav Zontak, visited Belgium. They participated in the celebration of the Eucharist which was followed by a reception and a dinner. After a program that was organized by Father Martelo they then visited the exhibition which was greatly appreciated by all those who had participated, more than 19 branches of the Vincentian Family.

OTHER ACTIVITIES DURING THE 350th ANNIVERSARY

Two Vincentian DVD's

With a text written by Father Edward Udovic, CM and with the collaboration of the Missionaries and the Daughters of Charity, DePaul University in Chicago, in order to commemorate the 350th anniversary of the death of Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac, has made a

film about Saint Vincent entitled: *Charity's Saint*. At the present time the film is in English, but there is hope that this text will be translated into Spanish.

Father Luigi Mezzadri, CM, with a beautiful text that is narrated by two professional radio announcers, presents us with another DVD entitled: *The oak tree and the snowdrop*. *Galanthus Nivalis* is also called the snowdrop and so Louise's courage and decisiveness are reflected in the snowdrop and Vincent's vigor and security are reflected in the oak tree.

Another Vincentian Congress

Cahiers, the trimester bulletin of the Vincentians in France, in edition #209 refers to a gathering of the Daughters of Charity and the Missionaries from France, Belgium and Switzerland held in Paris, October 10-11, 2009. This was a time to reflect together on the source of our life and our commitment.

A Vincentian Seminar in Sardinia

In Cagliari and Sassari about 1,000 Vincentians participated in one of two sessions of the Vincentian Seminar which was held for the tenth time.

When referring to these gatherings we must mention the work of the whole Vincentian Family that was coordinated by Father Giovanni Burdese, CM. These sessions represent a particular moment of unity which has made visible our presence on the Island.

Materials to support prayer and reflection

The web page for the 350th anniversary displayed some material that might be useful for distinct celebrations and reflections.

During the course of the year the Spanish version of *famvin* offered twelve power point presentations that were prepared by Sister María Vicenta Díaz, DC from the province of Madrid-Saint Louise. These can be downloaded at <http://famvin.org/es/archive/preparando-la-clausura-350-aniversario>

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*Archivist and Librarian
of the C.M. General Curia*

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2010 ANNUAL STATISTICS OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION

M I N I S T R I E S

Number of confreres involved in the ministries listed below. Each confrere is counted only once, considered under his principal ministry, as of 31 December 2010.

M I N I S T R Y	BISHOPS	PRIESTS	DEACONS	BROTHERS	STUDENTS
1. Parish (popular) Missions to the faithful		110		3	
2. Missionary parishes or districts	1	206	7	5	3
3. Parishes	4	889	9	21	2
4. Pilgrimage sanctuaries		44	1	4	
5. Seminaries and clerical formation	1	118	5	2	10
6. Formation of our own exclusively	2	161	2	6	
7. Missions Ad Gentes	1	144		3	
8. Daughters of Charity (Director, chaplain)		136			
9. Schools (primary, secondary, superior, professional)		166	2	11	1
10. Social Communications (publications, radio, television)		21		4	
11. Special studies		71	16	3	15
12. Chaplains (military, immigrants, hospital, associations)		124		1	
13. Chaplains (Vincentian Lay Groups)		70			
14. Direct Service of the Poor		48	1	11	1
15. Manual work		1		22	
16. Administration	11	133		11	
17. Retired, ill, convalescing	3	305		27	
18. Other	10	78	7	12	6
19. Absence from the Congregation		166	8	3	3
T O T A L	33	2991	58	149	41

PROVINCES	HOUSES & INCORPORATED MEMBERS BY PROVINCE - 2010							ADMITTED MEMBERS & ASPIRANTS BY PROVINCE - 2010															
	HOUSES	Bishops	Priests	Deacons	Permanent Deacons	Brothers	Students with Vows	TOTAL	ADMITTED MEMBERS					ASPIRANTS									
									CP	CB	P*	PD*	TOTAL	Voc. Grps.	Min. Sem.		Prep. Year		TOTAL				
															AP	AB	AP	AB		AP	AB		
GENERAL CURIA	5	0	8	0	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
AFRICA	47	6	288	15	0	14	4	327	152	8	0	0	0	160	59	0	66	0	89	0	89	0	214
Congo (Dem. Rep.)	9		46	2		1		49	27	1				28								6	6
Ethiopia	5	3	36	6		4		49	11					11			18		1		1		19
Madagascar	9	2	75	6		6		89	39	7				46	25		23		17		17		65
Mozambique	8	1	19			3	1	24						0	34				18				52
Nigeria	9		72	1				73	71					71					13				13
St. Justin de Jacobis - Eritrea	7		40				3	43	4					4			25		34				59
AMERICA	192	13	1000	19	1	63	17	1113	71	2	0	0	0	73	172	3	22	0	66	1	66	1	264
Argentina	8	1	40	1				42	3					3									0
Brazil - Curitiba	7	3	65	1		2		71		1				1	7								7
Brazil - Fortaleza	3		39	2				41	2					2					5		5		5
Brazil - Rio de Janeiro	12	2	59	3		8		72	6					6					8		8	1	9
Central America	10	2	43	1		2	3	51	1					1									0
Chile	7		19			2	2	23	5					5					5				5
Colombia	24	1	147	5		9	4	166	7					7	97	3			30		30		130
Costa Rica	4		12			3		15	1					1	10								10
Cuba	4		9					9	1					1					2				2

PROVINCES	HOUSES & INCORPORATED MEMBERS BY PROVINCE - 2010							ADMITTED MEMBERS & ASPIRANTS BY PROVINCE - 2010												
	HOUSES	Bishops	Priests	Deacons	Permanent Deacons	Brothers	Students with Vows	TOTAL	ADMITTED MEMBERS				ASPIRANTS							
									CP	CB	P*	PD*	TOTAL	Voc. Grps.		Min. Sem.		Prep. Year		TOTAL
														AP	AB	AP	AB	AP	AB	
Italy - Naples	11	2	41			1		44	6					3	3			9		15
Italy - Rome	9	1	44	1	1	2		49					0							0
Italy - Turin	13		61		2			63	3				3					1		1
Poland	27	3	257	4		4	7	275	21	1			22							0
Portugal	11	1	50					51					0	15	2					17
Slovakia	6		33	1		3		37	3				3							0
Slovenia	8	2	46			2		50	5				5							0
Spain - Barcelona	8	1	39			2		42					0	7						7
Spain - Madrid	15		96	1		12	1	110					0							0
Spain - Salamanca	13		73			9	1	83					0	2						2
Spain - Zaragoza	19		108	1		2		111	3				3						2	2
SS. Cyril and Methodius	7	1	23			1		25					0	2						2
OCEANIA	6	0	45	1	0	4		50	5	1	0	0	6	7	0	0	0	0	0	7
Australia	6		45	1		4		50	5	1			6	7						7
TOTAL	513	33	2991	54	4	149	41	3272	475	18	2	0	495	303	4	141	0	246	2	696

CP = Candidates to the Priesthood; CB = Candidates to the Brotherhood; P = Priests; PD = Permanent Deacons; P*/PD* = Priests/Permanent Deacons coming from a diocese or another Institute; AP = Aspirants to the Priesthood; AB = Aspirants to the Brotherhood.